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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

NEW YEAR GREETINGS, 1903

Thanks be to God that his grace has preserved us, "kept us from falling," through another year!—that so many of us are still of one heart and of one mind in respect to his Word and its service! Our appreciation must be increased by the remembrance that every testimony of the Word is to the effect that the close of the "harvest" time is to be a time of special testing to all professing to be the Lord's people; —"every man's work shall be tried so as by fire." When we remember that the adversary is to be permitted to bring "*strong* delusions" upon the Lord's people for the very purpose of sifting out all not truly his,—that they may believe lies and depart from the truth and be condemned as unworthy;—because they received not the truth in *the love of it*" (2 Thess. 2:10-12)—it surely should call forth our thanks to God that the opening of another year finds us still standing fast,—appreciating the truth and in full accord with all the divine appointments by which he has kept us from falling.

The Apostle reminds us that rejoicings do not belong as properly to him that putteth on the armor as to him who, having fought the good fight to the finish, shall lay aside the armor and put on robes of glory in the First Resurrection. (1 Kings 20:11; 2 Tim. 4:7, 8) Consequently we must not stop too long even to rejoice that we are what we are by the grace of God, but must go on! The new year is surely full of blessings for the *faithful*, according to all the precious promises of our Father's Word. We must grasp these afresh, allowing the Lord's faithfulness of the past to establish our trust the more firmly for the future. Without faith as the trolley to connect us with the current of divine power we will fail to "go on unto perfection."

"Faith can firmly trust him,—come what may."

Love, too, should be stimulated by a retrospective glance; —discerning the mercies of the Lord toward us should enthuse us with loving zeal for him and his. "We love him because he first loved us!" We seek to do those things pleasing to our Lord because we love him, and in proportion as we love him we will delight in such obedience and service,—even at the cost of self-sacrifice.

Good resolutions and the reëxamination of our ideal and standards of life are appropriate at this season, too. Not that the fully consecrated can add to their consecration—for if proper, it included our all. Not, either, that we should have an annual round up when we would seek pardon and start out afresh—as typical Israel did each "Day of Atonement" at the beginning of their new year. Spiritual Israelites, rather, are to live a daily, an hourly life of nearness to the High-Priest. The *blood* of the New Covenant is to be continually invoked for the cleansing of the slightest defilement of conscience, that thus the wedding garment of our Lord's imputed righteousness may not become bedraggled, but that the slightest spot being removed, we may have it "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

Nevertheless, self-examinations and good resolutions have a value at this season in particular. That reviews of business; taking account of stocks; ascertaining the profits and the losses of the year; etc., are profitable in respect to worldly affairs, all will admit; and the much more important affairs of the soul—the ascertainment of gains and losses as new creatures and how and when and where these came to us in the constant battle with the world, the flesh and the devil will surely profit all who make such reckonings with an eye single to the pleasement of the Lord.

Let us, then, set our spiritual aims, ambitions and endeavors still nearer to the perfect divine standard; remembering the while our Lord's words, "Without me ye can do nothing," let us be strong and courageous in the strength which he supplies and promises to increase as we are able and willing to accept it.

* * *

There is nothing specially new to note,—except that "all things are onward moving" in the direction indicated by the Word. The "churches" are coming more and more to favor the combination and trust principle and desire to apply it; —seemingly only a Morganizer is needed. Then the religious "irregulars" will be shamed and discomfited. Capital and labor are each fortifying—each preparing for the great struggle: yet neither realizes how tremendous the conflict will be—nor the results, as we do in the light of the Word. Financial prosperity holds the winds in "Christendom," though its continuance seems to depend on the expenditure of vast sums in outside wars. The financial conditions are becoming unfavorable in Great Britain, still more so in Germany, and yet more so in Russia.

We have recently noted the rapid progress of Socialism in Germany; below we quote from the New Orleans *Times-Democrat* respecting its progress in the United States:—

"What will be remembered as easily the most interesting —and we had almost said the most alarming—feature in the Convention of the American Federation of Labor of 1902, was revealed when the Convention, by a vote of 4,744 to 4,344, rejected this resolution:—

" 'Resolved, That this twenty-second annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor advise the working people to organize their economic and political power to secure for labor the full equivalent of its toil, and the overthrowal of the wage system and establishing an industrial co-operative democracy.'

"Although defeated, the resolution is especially significant by reason of the great number of votes recorded in favor of its adoption. Out of a total of 9,088, the pro-Socialists lost by the exceedingly slender majority of 400 votes. In other words, the American Federation of Labor, as it is today constituted, is almost evenly divided on the question whether or not Socialism should be indorsed. To be exact 47.68 per cent of the Federation is in favor of, and 52.32 per cent is opposed to, Socialism.

"These statistics are of themselves sufficient to make labor

leaders throughout the country pause and reflect whither they are tending. The speeches made in the Convention were overwhelmingly in favor of indorsing the Socialistic movement. Delegate Barnes compressed into two sentences the creed of the pro-Socialist advocates. 'Let us tell Mr. Morgan,' said he, 'that, to use his own words, there is nothing to arbitrate. We want your (his) mines, and we want your (his) railroads for the people of this country.' Delegate Layton said that 'the time had come when supplication should cease and action should begin.' 'The greatest power of the union, or laboring man,' said he, 'is the ballot. It should be used, and used for the attainment of the workingman's ambition.' The note sounded in these two speeches was echoed in the remarks of other delegates; and but for the vigorous speech made by Mr. Gompers the Federation would unquestionably have thrown the weight of its influence in favor of 'the overthrowing of the wage system and the establishment of an industrial co-operative democracy.'

"In straight-flung words, Mr. Gompers pointed out that Socialism had more than once been opposed to trades unionism; that the socialistic spirit was essentially the spirit of negation, and that the Federation should shun Socialism as it would leprosy. 'Good heavens!' he exclaimed. 'Study Socialism! Why, we have graduated from it long ago.' This was Mr. Gompers' position; and by taking it promptly he stemmed the tide of Socialism that was running high in the convention, and contrived to defeat the resolution. It required no little courage and no little capacity to do what Mr. Gompers did, and his attitude and conduct can hardly be too highly commended. The victory won by him was, however, dearly bought. Above the smoke of the battle, one fact looms large in the public eye, namely; that in a deliberative body of representative American workingmen, 47.68 per cent are in favor of Socialism in the United States."

* * *

Socialism should not be confounded with Communism or Anarchism; nevertheless, we believe it will surely eventuate in anarchy. Capital—private ownership—will not consent to Socialism on a broad basis and the conflict resulting will be what neither party premeditates or desires. There are really very few people sufficiently unbalanced in heart and mind to approve anarchy.

SOCIALIST VOTE OF THE WORLD

The *Appeal* gives the following figures as showing the marvelous growth of Socialism all over the world:

United States.

1890	13,704
1891	16,552
1892	21,512
1893	25,666
1894	30,020
1895	34,869
1896	36,275
1897	55,550
1898	91,749
1900	135,770
1902 Est.	400,000

Italy.

1893	20,000
1895	76,400
1897	134,496

Spain.

1893	7,000
1895	14,000
1897	28,000

Belgium.

1894	334,500
1898	534,324

Denmark.

1872	315
1884	6,805
1887	8,408
1890	17,232
1892	20,098
1895	25,019
1898	32,000
1900	43,285

Germany.

1867	30,000
1871	101,927
1874	351,670
1877	486,843
1878	437,158
1881	311,961
1884	599,990
1887	763,128
1890	1,427,098
1893	1,786,738
1898	2,125,000
Poll 1903	3,100,000

Serbia.

1895	55,000

Austria.

1895	90,000
1897	750,000

France.

1885	30,000
1888	91,000
1893	590,000
1898	1,000,000

Great Britain.

1895	55,000
1902	350,000

Switzerland.

1890	13,500
1893	29,822
1896	36,468

NEW FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

The London *Spectator*, one of the ablest journals in the world, remarks:—

"What a wonderful change has passed over our conception of the word 'property.' The writer is old enough to remember when nothing except land and houses was regarded as true property; but now a man may be a millionaire and own nothing that he can see. A few pieces of paper in a box at his banker's, or, better still, an inscription in a book of which he knows nothing except it exists, constitute him a man rich beyond the dreams of avarice, and, moreover, a man who has not to guard his property, and who can realize it—which the rich man of old could not do—in half an hour. It is a very curious change, and one the full effects of which we have yet to perceive."

This is in full agreement with what we have already pointed out—that bonds and stocks are being used now as instead of money. This is sure to affect conditions during the time of trouble.

MISSIONARY NEWS

The Secretary of "The American Board of Foreign Missions" reports $18,369,163 annual summary of income for Protestant foreign missions: and additions to church membership in all heathen lands for the year at 160,000;—the number dying during the year is not stated.

Estimating the births among the 1,000,000,000 heathens at only one-tenth of one per cent, the population increased 1,000,000. *Question.* How long would it require to convert heathendom to the present standard of "Christendom"? And then,—How long would it require to convert "Christendom" to the condition mentioned in the Lord's prayer—when God's will shall be done on Earth *even as* it is done in Heaven?

Thank God for the promised interference in the present order of things by Immanuel and his promised kingdom of heaven;—to bind Satan, open the blinded eyes of understanding and heal and bless all the families of the earth—forcefully, but lovingly—ultimately destroying all wilful evil doers!

CONCERNING PALESTINE

"Vienna, Nov. 5.—A dispatch from Constantinople confirms the statement that the Sultan is considering the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine, and that the proposition is opposed by the French and Russian legations in the interest of the claims of Catholic and Greek Christians to the holy places. The dispatch states that if these claims could be arranged satisfactorily, the scheme of a Jewish State could probably be carried out. The British embassy at Constantinople is said to look with much favor on the proposition to create a Jewish State in Palestine, and if matters should come to an issue, England would undoubtedly support the Sultan as against Russia and France in giving Palestine to the Jews. A noted diplomat is reported as saying: 'The Sultan of Turkey could take no wiser step for the maintenance of his power and the permanence of his empire than to make Palestine a Jewish State. He would thereby attract to his empire the friendly interest of Jews throughout the world, and the Jewish State would be a bulwark for Turkey against Russian aggression in that direction.'"

PROTESTANT FEDERATION

"Protestant Christianity is planning to make a demonstration. It is to be an outcome of a convention, just arranged, to be held in February, 1905, and probably in the city of Washington. The national federation of churches, at its meeting this year, created a committee, whose duty it is to secure representatives from all evangelical bodies. This committee has met with hearty response. Religious bodies South as well as North are taking hold of the idea with interest. The highest authorities are naming delegates, and these will meet in the proposed convention representatives from state and local federations. It is purposed by this convention to send forth a joint message signed by the chief pastors and addressed to Protestant Christianity of the United States. The purport of this message will be unity. The plea will be made that Christianity has been weakened by divisions and that the time has arrived for united action. No attempt will be made toward organic unity, but it will be claimed that upon a score of important questions a common ground exists, that overlapping and duplication can be prevented, and that evangelical thought can, if it will, make itself felt as it has not done heretofore."—St. Louis *Globe-Democrat.*

AN INTERESTING QUESTION ANSWERED

THE EXTENT OF JUDAS' KNOWLEDGE

Question.—The Psalms, quoted from in the New Testament, seem to show clearly that destruction is Judas' end,—but can we decide that the scribes and Pharisees of our Lord's time came under the two Scriptures that specially bear on the case, 1 Tim. 2:3-6, with the will of God that all should come to an "*Epignosin*" of the truth, and Heb. 6:4-6 that the ones

it is impossible to renew, are those who have once been enlightened, tasted the heavenly gift—become partakers of holy spirit—tasted the good word of God, and powers of the coming age? Did they reach those conditions? I think not.

Answer.—All will agree that no matter how positive a word may be used respecting the bringing of mankind to knowledge before judgment, *general knowledge* is not meant. To assume that general knowledge of the sciences, or even of the science of religion is necessary to a trial for eternal life, would be to assume that God had not given to father Adam a full, proper or just trial for eternal life;—and from such a proposition we would all dissent, for we know that he was justly tried and justly condemned. His *knowledge* will help us to understand what degree or kind of knowledge his children must have, before they can come under the responsibility of the second trial secured by the ransom for all. Father Adam's knowledge consisted in a discernment of the right and the wrong of the question before him—and no more knowledge than this was necessary. It was immaterial whether he thought of God as trinity or unity; whether he believed in heaven and hell, etc., or not; whether he knew about the sun, moon and stars, and the laws governing their motions, or not. He knew what was necessary for him to know; namely, (1) that God had a right to command his obedience and (2) that God had commanded him not to eat of that fruit, and had attached thereto some penalty. It did not matter whether he knew exactly all that the penalty implied or not. He knew that to eat would be transgression—sin.

So, we take it, is the responsibility of all mankind, as soon as they come mentally in contact with "the light of the world." We cannot conceive how Judas could be ignorant of the wrong which he committed, after his three years of experience with the Master, and in the use of the power of the holy Spirit communicated to him. It seems to us unnecessary that he should know either about the planetary movements, or about all the particulars of the divine plan: he knew of the holy and pure character of our Redeemer; and of his self-sacrificing service of Jehovah and the people; and it seems to us he must have known beyond question that his conduct was treason to God and to righteousness; and to every principle of goodness reprobate. We reason that if Adam's knowledge and transgression were justly punished with death, Judas' knowledge and sin could bring nothing short of the second death. However, we leave the matter; any who see it differently are entitled to hold their opinions.

Respecting the scribes and Pharisees: Their conduct seems indeed flagrant; we would find it impossible to imagine that they felt within themselves that they were doing the *right* thing in crucifying the spotless Lamb of God. Nevertheless, our Lord did not say of them that it had been better for them not to have been born; he merely said, "How can ye escape the condemnation of Gehenna?"—the second death. This leaves us abundant room to suppose that they may yet have opportunity to escape that condemnation; but it also suggests to us the probability that some of them will not escape the second death—that some of them had so perverted and seared their consciences with pride and wilfullness and love of evil that even the blessings of the Millennial age would fail to dissolve the callousness of their hearts.

"REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAY"

PHILIPPIANS 4:1-13.—JAN 11.

The Epistle to the Philippians is one of the most loving of all the church letters written by the Apostle Paul. In our last lesson we considered the story of the founding of that church and the cost thereof to the faithful Apostle and his companion Silas. The Epistle to the Philippians contains no reproofs, no chidings, such as appear in others of the epistles, but rather it is full of approval, commendation and special love. Apparently, too, this little company of the Lord's people loved the Apostle as fervently as he loved them. His afflictions on their account bound their hearts to him in lasting gratitude. We find that on at least four occasions they helped to sustain the Apostle; once while at Corinth (2 Cor. 11:9), twice while at Thessalonica (Phil. 4:16), and once while he was a prisoner at Rome. On this latter occasion they sent their gifts and expressions of love by a special messenger, Epaphroditus who, arriving at Rome in the malarial season, took dangerously ill—probably with what is termed the Pontine, or Roman fever. It was on the occasion of the recovery of Epaphroditus and his return to Philippi that the Apostle sent back with him this epistle.

A contemporary writer, referring to the practical manifestation of love by the Philippian brethren makes the following comment: "The people of Malta were the only others recorded who expressed their love in this way to Paul. The Ephesians wept over him, but there is nothing said of their expressing their feelings by aiding him. Perhaps they did." Evidently the Apostle needed some such manifestation of affection and appreciation of his efforts on their behalf, for his own encouragement. It must have been hard, indeed, for him to love the church at Corinth as he did—laying down his life on its behalf, as well as on behalf of the other churches—while realizing keenly, as his epistles distinctly intimate, that he was but lightly esteemed in return.—1 Cor. 4:7-9; 2 Cor. 10:10.

In view of this close and dear relationship between the Apostle and the church at Philippi, as between an under shepherd, or pastor, and the flock, how full of meaning the first verse of our lesson! "My brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and my crown,—so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved." These words from the pen of a conscientious and sincere man, such as the Apostle was, are fragrant with the very essence of Christian love and fellowship. How much they must have been appreciated, and how much they must have been deserved!

But if there was nothing in the condition of the Philippians to reprove, they, nevertheless, needed the exhortation to stand fast. They had already, by the Lord's favor, reached a considerable attainment in the graces of the spirit,—they must needs be tested, however, to prove them, to try them; and for this ordeal, which every individual, as well as every congregation of the Lord's people must expect, the Apostle wished to prepare them—to urge that they do not retreat from the advanced steps of love and obedience already taken—that they continue firm, not, however, trusting to their own strength, but, as he expresses it, that they should "stand fast in the Lord," trusting in his power, in his grace, sufficient for every time of need.

Several of the sisters of this congregation appear to have been prominent helpers in the work, not only when the Apostle was with them, but subsequently. Two of these are mentioned by name (v. 2), and the exhortation that they be of the same mind in the Lord implies that in some respects at least these two were at variance. It is well that we note the Apostle's language to them very carefully, for there is wisdom in it. He does not exhort them to be of one mind in everything; quite possibly realizing that because of very different temperaments and dispositions, habits of life, etc., this might be impossible; but he does urge them to be of the same mind *in the Lord*—to preserve a unity of heart and head, in all things relating to the Lord and his cause.

It will be of advantage to all of the Lord's people to pursue in such matters the course which the Apostle here advocates—not to attempt to "harmonize all earthly things" under present conditions;—to be content that each should have differences of opinion on various other subjects, and to insist only on oneness, fellowship, union, harmony in the Lord, in the truth, in the spirit of love, and toward all the members of the household of faith. Insistence on more than this—endeavoring to bring all to one view on social, financial and other questions—endeavoring to bring all to one view respecting dress and food, etc., has caused grievous strivings and estrangements between members of the household of faith; and all such endeavors should be recognized as contrary to the Lord's instruction through the Apostle—contrary to the "spirit of a sound mind"— contrary to the wisdom that cometh from above,—which entreats and exhorts for unity only *in the Lord* and along the line of questions positively settled by the Lord in the Scriptures—which generously leaves with each full liberty to act and to judge on all questions not positively settled by the Scriptures. We urge that all of the Lord's dear flock copy the wisdom of the Apostle in this matter, and heed his injunction, given to these two sisters, to let nothing come between them in the Lord.

In the third verse of our lesson "Yokefellow" apparently should be written with a capital, as the proper name of a brother in the Philippian church—not only a Yokefellow in name, but as here declared, "a *true* Yokefellow," and as we might expect, therefore, one who would be ready to coöperate with and to assist others. In the Apostle's judgment, some others were burdened, needing assistance. He specifies Clement and the two sisters already referred to, whose differences were burdening them. That the differences had not yet extended so as to injure them spiritually, the Apostle firmly believed, and hence he declares that he still recognizes them

as fellow-laborers, still recognizes that their names are in the book of life. On this account they should seek harmony in the Lord, and Brother Yokefellow should fulfil toward them the true meaning of his name, by helping them over their difficulties; helping them to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace in the Lord.

There is no room for any of us today to become apostles, for there were only twelve of them, and never will there be more. (Rev. 21:14) There may not be opportunities for all of us to do great things in the Lord's service in this harvest time, either; but there are opportunities for every one of us to be true yokefellows—to assist the dear brethren and sisters with their burdens;—not merely financial burdens, or burdens of illness, but sometimes to assist them over difficulties and burdens of the kind suggested in this lesson—burdens of different temperaments and dispositions. Let us each and all seek to be true yokefellows to the various members of the body of Christ. We may be sure that the Lord will highly esteem such service, and that thus we will be growing in that grace which he so highly commended when he said, "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God."

Laying down certain general principles for godly living, healthful for new creatures, the Apostle exhorts,—"Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice." This, the Golden Text of the lesson, represents the very essence of Christian living. Under present conditions it is not supposable that outward circumstances will always be favorable to rejoicing, from the natural standpoint. He, therefore, who would rejoice alway in the Lord must have faith in the Lord, —trust, hope, love. Without these he could not so appropriate to himself the gracious promises of the Word as to be able to rejoice in tribulation and suffering and under trials and difficulties, and when falsely accused and misrepresented, and when slandered and evilly entreated for the truth's sake. The only ones who can rejoice *alway* are those who are living very near to the Lord, and who can feel always their oneness with him, and that his protection and care are over them, and that his promise is sure, that all things shall work together for their highest welfare, as new creatures.

Others may rejoice today and be cast down tomorrow; only the faithful in Christ Jesus are privileged to rejoice alway. The thought of the Lord's favors, past, present and to come, makes all the trials and difficulties of such to appear very light afflictions, as but for a moment, not worthy to be compared with the glory, honor and immortality promised, and the blessed privileges of divine service, both here and hereafter. The Apostle emphasizes the matter by saying, "Again I say, Rejoice." We cannot have too many rejoicing Christians, nor can they rejoice too much, if they rejoice *in the Lord*. This rejoicing is not necessarily boisterous, nor of necessity the reverse. It implies serenity, happiness, peace, pleasure of soul, however, and does not mean that noisy demonstration is essential, as some seem mistakenly to think.

The Apostle further exhorts that the faithful let their moderation, their forbearance, be manifested, not only toward the brethren, but toward all with whom they have to do. The Greek word here rendered "moderation" seems to carry with it the thought of *reasonableness*, and of not exacting our rights too rigorously. Mercy and leniency are certainly qualities required of all who would be members of the body of the Anointed. Faithfulness in the performance, as far as possible, of all that justice would require of us, and mercifulness in respect to all our requirements of justice from others should be our rule: so shall we be the children of our Father which is in heaven, for he is kind and merciful to the unthankful.

"The Lord is at hand!" The thought seems to be that we who are the Lord's are not living for the present time. We are expecting great changes to be ushered in when our King shall take to himself his great power and begin his reign. We are not to be struggling for the last inch or the last penny, nor for the extreme of our own rights; but, rather, to be so full of rejoicing in the good things coming, and already ours by faith, that it will make us generous as respects the things of this present time in our dealings with the brethren and with others. We are not expecting justice from the Lord, for nothing that we have done or could do would *justly* call for such exceeding great and precious things as he has promised us. And as we are expecting grace or bounty in so large measure we can well afford to be generous and liberal in our sentiments toward others—especially toward the household of faith, because they are our brethren and fellow-representatives of the Lord himself, from whom our bounty is to come; and toward the world without, because they have not the future prospects which we possess, and hence set their hearts upon the things of this present time; and we can well afford to accord them their full share of these or more, since we are so rich through our heavenly Father and our heavenly Bridegroom.

That the Apostle did not mean to be understood that the Lord's second advent might be expected momentarily, nor before his death, is evident; for elsewhere in his epistles he clearly sets forth his expectation to die, and to wait for the reward, the crown of righteousness laid up for him; elsewhere also he clearly intimates that the day of the Lord could not come until after the great falling away mentioned in the prophecies, and the manifestation of the Man of Sin, etc. (2 Tim. 3:7, 8; 2 Thess, 2:2-10) Evidently, therefore, his only thought in this exhortation, "The Lord is at hand," was, as already suggested—that we are living in the close of the reign of evil, that the dawning of the day of the Lord is not far distant, and that to the eye of faith it is so near that its influence should affect even the smallest affairs of the present life.

"Be careful for nothing" is the next exhortation; but since our English word *careful* has lost its original meaning, there is danger of error here. The word originally had the thought of being full of care—anxiety, trouble. The Apostle's words correspond exactly to our Lord's injunction, "Take no thought," and signify, Be not anxious, burdened, full of care. It is proper that the Lord's people should be careful, in the meaning of the word careful as used today. We should not be careless, indifferent, loose in our conduct or words, but be circumspect.

Anxiety and burdens are unavoidable to those who are depending on themselves, their own wisdom, their own strength, their own skill; but the members of the body of Christ, accepted in the Beloved, adopted into the divine family, sons of God, are assured over and over again in the Word that if they abide faithful all things shall work together for their highest welfare. Why should they be burdened? Why should they feel anxious? He who guards their interests slumbers not. When Christians find themselves anxious, fearful, burdened, the evidence is that they are lacking in faith, and the probability is that they have either never grown to the point of having the proper faith in the Lord, or that they have allowed "earth-born clouds" and cares of this life to come between them and the Lord, so that they no longer have confidence that they are abiding in his love and in his care. All in such condition should go at once to the throne of heavenly grace, and to the divine promises, and obtaining mercy at the former, and feeding upon the latter, they should grow strong in the Lord and in confidence in him, and their corroding cares will give place to faith, confidence, peace of heart, whatever the outward conditions.

Such is the counsel of the Apostle—that instead of continuing in the anxious condition, we should lay all of our affairs before the Lord, supplicating his promised providential care, acknowledging our own lack of wisdom;—and gladly accepting his wisdom and the provisions of his love, we should make every request in a spirit of thanksgiving. This spirit of thanksgiving implies a recognition that the circumstances and conditions in which *we are*, have been supervised of the Lord, and that we are appreciative of his care and trust it for the future. Thanksgiving for what we have, and a full appreciation of the Lord's leadings hitherto and now, will preclude any anxiety for the future; for the thankful heart will conclude that he who favored us and redeemed us while we were yet sinners will much more favor and do for us now that we are his through the adoption that is in Christ Jesus.

The question may arise, Why will not God give us the things which he sees us to need without our making petition to him and claiming his promises? Undoubtedly because we need previously to come into the proper attitude of heart to receive his favors and to be advantaged by them. Even as it is, we may be sure that we do not sufficiently appreciate the divine care bestowed upon us hitherto and now. Even in the attitude of prayer and thanksgiving we probably do not discern one-half of our causes for gratitude, as we shall see them by and by, when we shall know even as we are known. It is the same with natural hunger. Unless we were so constituted that the gnawings of hunger would show us our need of food we would probably appreciate it less, even if we ate as much and with the same regularity.

If we have the foregoing described spirit of rejoicing and trust in the Lord, and make all of our requests, so far as we are able to discern, in harmony with his promise, and *accept with gratitude and thanksgiving, whatever his providence may send us*, then the Apostle assures us, "The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." The thought here is distinct. It is not our own peace that is referred to. We may by nature be more or less indisposed to peace, restless, dissatisfied, discontented, fearful, foreboding or quarrelsome; but, follow-

ing the course outlined above, we learn to trust God in all of our affairs, and it is the peace of God—the peace which comes to us from a realization of God's power and goodness and willingness to hold us by his right hand as his children—that come in, to keep us from worry, from anxiety, etc. The thought is that this peace stands guard continually, as a sentinel, to challenge every hostile or worrying thought or fear. It keeps the Christian's mind, so that he at heart has peace with the Lord, fellowship, communion;—and it guards his mind also, his reasoning faculties, instructing him and assuring him respecting the divine power and wisdom and love. But it does not assure him of anything respecting his own perfection or worthiness of acceptance before God. This proper peace merely assures us of our standing in divine favor through *Christ Jesus,*—his worthiness, his sacrifice, his aid.

Now we come to the Apostle's grand summing up of the way in which the Christian is to set his affections—fix them, fasten them, hold them upon profitable things; that he may grow in grace as well as in knowledge and love of God. The Apostle points out that the will having been consecrated to the Lord, faith having been exercised in rejoicing and thanksgiving in all of the Lord's providences, the peace of trust having come in, the further steps in the development of character will be through *guarding our thoughts:* and this means also the guarding of our words and acts, because it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh, and that the whole course of life is directed. What, then, should be the trend of the Christian's thoughts after he has reached the grand development already outlined by the Apostle? It should be toward things that are true, having no sympathy with anything that is false or even exaggerated. Whoever sympathizes with falsehood or exaggeration is more or less defiling himself. Whoever cleanses his thoughts, and avoids exaggeration, etc., is in that degree purifying his mind and his entire character, and coming the more into touch and sympathy with the Lord himself, who is "the Truth."

Nor is it sufficient that we are sure of the truth of matters. We are to test them further, and discern to what extent they are honorable, noble; for although the Lord has accepted us, ignoble and imperfect, and has covered the ignoble features of our characters, and purposes to cover them to the end with his own merit, nevertheless, we cannot be in sympathy with the ignoble features of our fallen condition, but on the contrary must desire true nobility, and the highest standards of honor in our hearts, in our thoughts, in all of our dealings with our God and with our fellows. The test of honor is therefore to be applied after the test of the truth. The thing might be true, but is it honorable to think about it or tell about it? This is another question.

Another test we are to apply is, Are the things just? We are not to allow our minds to run along lines that would be unjust, and we are to learn to apply this test of justice to every thought and word and act of ours, while learning at the same time to view the conduct of others from a different standpoint;—so far as reason will permit, from the standpoint of mercy, forbearance, pity, helpfulness. But we cannot be too careful how we criticize every thought we entertain, every plan we mature, that the lines of justice shall in no sense of the word be infringed by us with our hearts' approval.

Purity is another quality to be esteemed by us. We are to love and cultivate that which is pure to such an extent that that which is impure will become painful to us, distressing, and we will desire to drop it from memory, and this will only be accomplished by continually thinking upon those things that are pure, and avoiding the giving of thought to the things that are impure. We are to recognize true loveliness, and to esteem it. From our standpoint the impure, the unjust, the untrue, the dishonorable things, cannot appear lovely, desirable, worthy of emulation. When we would think on the purest of things we must of necessity lift our mental vision to as high a point as possible, and, as nearly as we may be able, discern the loveliness of the perfect character of our God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and proportionately the loveliness manifested in one or another of the followers of Jesus, who walk closely in his footsteps. The mind that frequently calls up the lovely perfections of the Lord and the truth, and is well filled by these, is guarded greatly against intrusions of unlovely and unholy things, contrary to the spirit of the Lord. The Apostle concludes the list, by referring to all things of good repute: things of any virtue or value, things in any degree praiseworthy—the noble words or noble deeds or noble sentiments of anybody, we may safely meditate upon, and as a consequence find ourselves growing toward these ideals upon which our minds, our new natures, thus feed. We will become more and more transformed by the renewing of our minds, and approach nearer and nearer to the glorious likeness of our Lord and Master, being changed from glory to glory, inch by inch, step by step, little by little, during the present life; and our thoughts being in this attitude and our union with the Lord maintained, we shall have part in the first resurrection, which will perfect us forever in the Lord's image and likeness.

How many (how few!) can say what the Apostle says in vs. 9? "The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, those things do!" This should be the standard of every Christian, because they each and all are representatives of the Lord, ambassadors for him; hence, so far as in them lieth, their conduct and words should be such as would be living epistles, read by the brethren and by the world to profit. No wonder the Apostle adds that, doing thus, "the God of peace shall be with you." So surely as he was with the Apostle he will be with all others similarly walking in the footsteps of Jesus.

"I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at length ye have *revived* your thought for me." These words seem to imply that their thoughtfulness for the Apostle, and earnestness to improve opportunities to serve him, had to some extent relaxed for a time and been revived. Then, as though fearful that his words might be understood as a reproof, he adds, "Ye did indeed take thought, but ye lacked opportunity." How careful was this man of God not unnecessarily to wound the feelings of the brethren, and how careful we all should likewise be to let the love of God extend, not only to the degree of giving us liberal sentiments toward the brethren, but also to the extent of influencing our tongues and pens not to wound unnecessarily even the least of them.

The Apostle hastens to point out that he is not complaining of *want.* He had learned to put into practice himself the lesson which he was just communicating to them, regarding rejoicing in the Lord,—to cast aside anxious thought and to approach the Lord in prayer and supplication in thanksgiving, and he possessed the resultant peace. In this condition of heart, however many may have been his necessities, he was not in *want,* for he was *satisfied* that the Father would provide the things which he really needed—and more he did not *want;* for, as he explains, he had learned the lesson, "In whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." We are not to be contented after the manner of the tramp or the indolent and shiftless, who would prefer to "live by faith," at the expense of others who "labor, working with their hands." We are not to be content to allow the opportunities and talents and privileges which the Lord has given us to lie idly by, unused; but while using these talents and opportunities to the very best of our ability and intelligence, and while seeking in prayer and supplication, rejoicing and thanksgiving, to use them all as would please the Lord we should be *content with the result of such efforts.*

We should conclude that our heavenly Father who feeds the sparrows and who clothes the fields with verdure is quite able to supply our needs in the manner and to the degree that would be for our highest welfare; and so, after having done our part to the best of our ability, we are to be *thoroughly contented* with the results—even if the results should be the barest necessities of life. But we are not to be contented with the barest necessities unless these are the best results obtainable from a reasonable and judicious use of opportunities and talents which the Lord has given us, consistent with our consecration to his service. "Be content with such things as ye have" does not ignore talents and opportunities, for these are part of the things which we *have*—the things which, as stewards, we are bound to use to the best of our judgments.

Surely the Lord was fitting the Apostle for a grand place in the heavenly kingdom, when he gave him such a variety of experiences as are detailed in the 12th verse. Surely, as the Lord was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, that he might be a faithful High Priest for the Millennial kingdom (as well as to us now), so the Apostle, by his experiences, evidently was being fitted and prepared for a very honorable and prominent place in the royal priesthood of the same kingdom. And so with us: if we find our experiences in life very checkered we may conclude that the Lord sees that we need both the heights and depths of prosperity and adversity to properly instruct us and qualify us for the position he designs for us in the future. Let us, then, as the Apostle did, *learn how* to abound, not allowing the abundance of earthly good things to swerve us from our consecration vows; and *learn also how* to be in want (need) and yet not to *want* anything beyond what the Lord's wisdom and providences sees best to give,—to be content.

The secret of the Apostle's success is stated in the last verse of the lesson. It was his close relationship to the Lord,

his intimate union with him, his reliance upon him: he was abiding as a branch in the vine, and was strengthened by the same spirit, and thus was enabled to do all these things and to pass through all these experiences with gratitude, with thankfulness, with rejoicing. Let us all thus learn to "Rejoice in the Lord *alway*."

TURNING THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN

ACTS 17:1-12.—JANUARY 18.

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet."—Psa. 119:105.

When released from the prison at Philippi, Paul, Silas and Timothy went about a hundred miles direct to Thessalonica, the largest commercial city of that district—Macedonia. Nothing daunted by their experience at Philippi, apparently not even waiting for their backs to thoroughly heal from the wounds there received, Paul at once began a vigorous presentation of the Gospel. As was his custom, he went first to the Jews. The propriety of this course is evident: the Jews were familiar with the prophecies of the Messiah, and although making their home amongst the Gentiles, nevertheless, as the Apostle declares, they were continually hoping for the fulfilment of the grand promises made to Abraham, confirmed unto Isaac and unto Jacob, and that by divine oath, or affirmation. —Acts 26:7.

Not only were the Jews, acquainted with the prophecies and looking for their fulfilment in a Messiah, better prepared than other peoples for the message of the Gospel, but, additionally, it was part of the divine will that the first offer of the Gospel should go to the Jew, the natural seed of Abraham, who was, by divine intention, to have the first opportunity of becoming a part of the spiritual seed. Furthermore, the Jewish synagogues were ostensibly conducted on a liberal plane, anyone of reasonable ability being free there to show what he could of the teaching of the Scriptures. Thus the Apostle met with the Jews on three Sabbath days; and, according to his own narrative, he labored with his hands for temporal necessities between times. (1 Thess. 2:9) It was during this stay of probably three to six months that he twice received financial aid from the brethren at Philippi.

The result of his labors was the nucleus of a flourishing church, to which two of his epistles were addressed. The Apostle's attitude toward these brethren may reasonably be taken as the criterion of his general attitude toward all of the Lord's dear flock. He dealt not with them as a lord or master amongst slaves or subordinates; but, using his own words, he was gentle toward them, as a nursing mother to her children. (1 Thess, 2:7) He admonished, comforted, instructed them, "as a father doth his children." (1 Thess. 2:11) He lived an unblamable, unselfish life in their midst, giving them the Gospel, and with it his very life.—1 Thess. 2:5-8, 10.

The method of the Apostle's teaching is expressed in the statement that he "reasoned with them out of the Scriptures," opening and showing forth "that it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead." The Greek word used signifies that the teaching was in the nature of a dialogue. He appealed to the Scriptures, offered explanations of their meaning, pointed out how this meaning found its fulfilment in the experience of our Lord, and heard and replied to queries and objections. Like other Jews, these had, of course, thought chiefly on the Scriptures which predict Messiah's glory and kingdom, and the grandeur of the position of Israel as his people, dispensing blessing to all the families of the earth. The Apostle pointed out the other Scriptures which spoke of "the sufferings of Christ," and how it was necessary that he should redeem the world before he could properly deliver it from the power of sin and death. We may be sure that he had the prophetic statements well in mind, and also the various types of the law, and that these were called up in order before his hearers, and the evidences adduced that our Lord fulfilled these; and not only that his death was necessary, as typified in Isaac, but also his resurrection from the dead, that he might be the distributor of the mercies of God. The word "opening" carries with it the thought that these Scriptures had been closed previously, and this is in harmony with the statement of Luke, when mentioning the Lord's discourse with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, it is declared that he "*opened* unto them the Scriptures," saying, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer."—Luke 24:26, 46; 1 Pet. 1:11.

The work to be done today very closely resembles that which was done by the Apostle as here recorded. There is need for us to go with the "meat in due season," first of all to those who have already been the recipients of divine favors and great advantages every way, to *open* to them other Scriptures which are now due to be understood;—which show the grand purposes of our heavenly Father in connection with the blessing of all the families of the earth through the church glorified; and that the glorified church, under its head, Christ Jesus, is to constitute the kingdom of heaven, the divine agency for the blessing of all. It is appropriate that we adopt largely the same plan that the Apostle did, and *reason* with people out of the Scriptures, opening them before their minds gradually, that they may catch some glimpses of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan. Nevertheless, we know that it will be now even as it was then—that only those who have "an ear to hear" will hear, and that the others will be stirred up to antagonism, bitter envyings, jealousies, etc.

The Apostle's work was evidently well done. his arguments effective—the result was that some of them (Jews) were persuaded and took sides with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks quite a good many,—who had been feeling after God and who probably had realized that there was more true religion with the Jew than elsewhere,—were now, because of having less Jewish prejudice, more ready than their Jewish friends to hear and appreciate the Gospel of Christ. Of the chief women of the city, too, quite a number were influenced by the message and become followers of Christ.

Christian people in all denominations today are claiming great liberty—that they are not sectarian, and that all who love the Lord have fullest opportunity to worship with them. But we find that if we take them at their word and attempt to reason with them out of the Scriptures respecting the things now due to be understood, pointing out that we are in the dawn of restitution times, that the Millennial kingdom is about to be ushered in, and that Christ is not only the Priest who redeemed his people with his blood, but is shortly to be the great Prophet and King who is to rule and instruct the whole world of mankind, the majority are unable to receive this—it is too contrary to their preconceived notions. Especially do the leading ones, the preachers and elders and Sunday School superintendents, feel that they must oppose the truth; that they must not admit that there are in the Word of God "things new and old—meat in due season for the household of faith." Their objections are often inspired by jealousy or envy, as they note that the message of grace appeals to the hearts of some of the very best of their number, and some of the very best outside their number—of the world.

None like to complain, after having boasted of Christian liberty and fellowship;—they murmur that our preaching of the good tidings of great joy is proselyting—"attempting to steal their members," etc. They exclaim, "Why do you not go to the slums, instead of coming in amongst us to steal away our best members, our ripest wheat?" We answer that a similar charge of proselyting might with equal force have been brought against our Lord Jesus and against the apostles. The Apostle, as we see, wherever he went, sought for the most religious and most intelligent people, instead of seeking for the most ignorant and the most degraded. Why? Because he well knew that the Gospel he had been sent to proclaim was not intended of the Lord to convert the world, but to *gather out of the world* a "little flock," a people for the Lord's name. (Acts 15:14) He knew that the Gospel he had to preach would not appeal to the most degraded hoodlums of society; on the contrary, it would appeal most to intelligent people,—and he presented it in as logical, reasonable and intelligent a manner as it could possibly be set forth. It is still proper for us to pursue the same course, and the conditions today of proclaiming the second presence of the Lord, and that the time is at hand for the establishment of the kingdom and for the gathering of the elect wheat into the barn, can better be presented now to the intelligent, thoughtful, devout people in all the various sects, and of the world, than to others.

Evidently the discussions of those three Sabbath days were all that the Jews as a whole could endure;—apparently the ministers of the truth, thenceforth excluded, went to the house of a prominent believer, Jason, and from there continued their propaganda,—possibly holding meetings at his house. Meantime the opposing Jews at Thessalonica received information from their brethren, opponents of the truth at Philippi, respecting these servants of the Lord, and the message they carried;—and, doubtless, the adversary persuaded them that they were engaged in a noble cause when they gathered a rabble of market-loungers, "roughs and toughs," to raise a com-

motion, and as a mob to make an assault upon Jason's house, to take the Apostle and his companions before the authorities and have their work stopped. So some of a similar class in spiritual Israel today feel toward the truth and its servants, if we may judge from the epithets sometimes used. The inciting of Sunday School scholars to tear up religious literature and throw the fragments at the distributors is about on a par with the conduct of those Jews of Thessalonica in inciting a mob—the difference between their day and ours of more general intelligence and better police regulations being taken into consideration. A disinterested spectator would be inclined to query—What can be the evil teachings of the WATCH TOWER publications, that would lead a professedly "liberal servant of God" today to feel such an animosity against them? We would only reply that we know of nothing contained in this literature that should arouse any but the warmest sentiments of love toward God and toward the brethren and toward the world in general. It might similarly be questioned in the minds of disinterested persons why reputable Jews and rabbis should incite a mob against the Apostle and his companions? and why the high-priest and Scribes and Pharisees incited the multitude against our Lord? Pilate, evidently, was in this position when he inquired respecting our Lord, "Why, what evil hath he done?" It is because the Lord's message was one of grace and truth that he was hated and crucified. It was because the apostles and their co-laborers were telling forth the same message of the grace of God in Christ and the blessings yet to come through them, that they were maligned and opposed; and it is the same Gospel, the same good tidings, the same joyful message, of which Christ is the center, the kingdom and the blessings for all the world of mankind the circumference, that is hated and maligned today;—not by the world, but by those who professedly are God's people.

Not finding Paul and Silas, the mob dragged Jason and others of the believers before the rulers. The charges were very serious ones—inciting to anarchy and treason—turning the world upside down, and teaching that there is another king, Jesus, whose kingdom is to be universal in due time. While these charges were fraudulent as respects the true standpoint, they nevertheless had in them a sufficiency of truth to make them appear serious. It is true that the Gospel of Christ is revolutionary in its character; that whenever it enters the heart of a man it keeps turning things upside down continually, until it is either ejected or has produced a transformation of heart and life. There is no peace between right and wrong, or light and darkness, in any heart. Peace can be secured only by giving way either to the light or to the darkness; either to the truth or to the error; and since the error is the more popular, the more general, the majority choose peace along that line. The Lord's people, however, the sincere lovers of righteousness, can have peace on no other terms than those of loyalty to the Lord and his Word, and the principles of his righteousness. The same is true in respect to all the affairs of the world. It is the Gospel of Christ, the Gospel which *will be a Gospel of peace in due time*, that at the present time, because of evil and ignorance in the world, is setting on fire the very foundations of "the present evil world," and will ultimately result in the great figurative conflagration which shall consume this present order of things, political, financial, social, religious,—that upon the ruins of present institutions the Lord may shortly erect his kingdom of righteousness—with peace upon proper foundations of justice and love.

We must not be surprised if this Gospel of peace has the same influence today as it had in the days of our Lord and of the apostles. Mark the effect of the precious message at Thessalonica and at Philippi and elsewhere. Mark the effect when the message was delivered from the lips of him who spake as never man spake, and of whose wonderful words it is recorded that "all the people bare him record and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." Nevertheless, however graciously stated, the truth is a sword which penetrates in every direction, and which, as our Lord foretold, frequently sets parents against children and children against parents, because the darkness hateth the light and opposeth it in every possible manner.

The decrees of the emperors respecting riots and treason were very strict, and all rulers were held rigidly to account. Hence, when the charges were made of anarchy and treason, both the multitude and the rulers were "troubled;" the multitude, because more or less of a riot had occurred, seemingly because of treason;— and this might lead to the taking away of some of the city's privileges and liberties, its loss of commerce, etc. The rulers were troubled because they were in danger of being called to account unless they took active steps for the repression of anything resembling treason. They knew nevertheless, that the charges were fabrications, and, hence, got out of the difficulty by placing Jason and his companions under bonds to keep the peace—to see that similar riots did not occur again. This necessitated the sending of Paul and Silas away as quietly and as quickly as possible.

It need not surprise us to have, at no distant day, charges of anarchy, etc., made against those who today are proclaiming present truth, the harvest message, the establishment of the kingdom, etc. It might be claimed against us that we are not sufficiently in accord with Cæsar's government, the kingdoms of this world; that we do not manifest sufficient interest in the elections, nor in the militia, etc.; and that our teaching that the Lord is about to establish his kingdom, and that it will be set up at the expense of all present institutions, which will fall in a time of trouble and anarchy, implies sympathy with anarchy. The charges would be no more true in our case than in the case of the Lord and the apostles; nevertheless, it may be used as a powerful weapon some day, and if it is we must trust to the same God who guarded the interests of his cause then, and who is equally able to guard it now. We may be sure that the door of opportunity for proclaiming the good tidings will not close until the true "wheat" shall have been found, until the elect shall have heard the message that is now due, that they should come out of Babylon and be gathered to the Lord, instead of being bound to human institutions.

In view of the Lord's teaching regarding this subject, and of how the wisest presentation of it may be ultimately misconstrued, it behooves everyone who would serve the truth faithfully to be as careful as possible not to be misunderstood; —to let it be clearly understood that we neither participate in nor advocate anarchy of any kind; but, on the contrary, are standing for righteousness and the highest of all laws, the divine law; and that we believe that the poorest of laws are better than none, and that the anarchy that will inevitably come upon the world, according to divine predictions, will be a great curse, a great disadvantage in many respects; and that the only reason why we are able to look upon it with any degree of complacency is because of the assurances given us in the Lord's Word that it will be speedily followed by the kingdom of God's dear Son;—in power and authority, to fully control all the turbulent elements.

Leaving Timothy at Thessalonica, Paul and Silas journeyed about fifty miles to a rather obscure Grecian city, called Berea, and, according to their custom, realizing that the preaching of the Gospel of Christ was their chief business, they lost no time in engaging therein. Again they sought the Jews in the synagogue, and this time found some specially susceptible to the truth, referred to as "more noble than they of Thessalonica." The Greek word used here for "noble" seems to imply persons of noble birth, a higher and nobler class than those of the more commercial city. Nobility of character is favorable, wherever it is found, and from whatever cause, and true nobility implies reasonableness, as distinguished from prejudice. The Bereans were reasonable, professing to believe all that was written in the law and the prophets; to be looking for the Messiah; etc., and they welcomed the servants of God who sought to draw their attention particularly to the "things written aforetime." With all readiness of mind they began to examine the Scriptures, not merely on the Sabbath days, but daily,—to see how well the Apostle's arguments were supported by the testimony of the law and the prophets. As we should expect, many of so noble a class accepted the good tidings. Indeed, the wonder is that any person of noble and reasoning mind, once becoming acquainted with the glorious message of God's love and mercy in Christ—his plan for selecting the church now, and by and by of blessing all the families of the earth through it—could disbelieve or could attribute such a Gospel to any human source. Surely its internal evidences are convincing that it is not of man nor by man, but of the Lord.

QUESTIONS OF GENERAL INTEREST

CHRIST THE FIRST FRUITS

Question.—Does the word "first fruit" in 1 Cor. 15:20-23 refer to our Lord Jesus only or to *the Christ*, head and body?

Answer.—Our Lord Jesus, as represented in verse 20, was certainly the *first fruit of all.* If we were speaking of summer fruit and would say that strawberries are the first fruit of the season, we could also pick up the first ripe strawberry and say, *This* is the first fruit. So it is true of our Lord Jesus,

the first fruit, and also true of the Lord and the church together, that they are the "first-fruit unto God of his creatures."—Jas. 1:18.

Verse 23 refers to the entire church (the Christ, head and body) as the first fruit, because the discussion is with reference to "every man in his own order," and not with reference to our Lord Jesus personally. The Lord Jesus and the church, which is his body, united in glory will constitute the first fruit, the first resurrection (the overcomers being partakers of his resurrection. Phil. 3:10; Rev. 20:4. Compare 2 Pet. 1:4) "Afterward they that are [who shall become] Christ's at [during] his presence;" that is, after the close of the Gospel age and the glorification of the Christ will come the second order or class of those to be "made alive."—Vs. 22.

Verse 22 takes in all who shall be "made alive;" that is, all who shall ever come to perfection of life, eternal life. It declares that these shall attain this life by virtue of being "in Christ," even as all men who were in Adam lost life.

These verses ignore entirely all who, when brought to a knowledge of the truth, reject it and wilfully choose sin; and they are in harmony with other Scriptures which declare that "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."—1 John 5:12.

The description of verse 23 relates, therefore, entirely to the Millennial age, which will begin with the glorification of those who have become Christ's during the Gospel age and including the perfecting of the remainder of those who shall during the Millennial age accept Christ and the life which is in him. Verse 23 reaches, therefore, down to and beyond the final trial at the end of the Millennial age, represented in Rev. 20:7-10; and verse 24 represents the everlasting condition after the world shall have been blessed with the knowledge of the truth, and the opportunity of coming into Christ as the "City of Refuge," and after all who would corrupt the earth (all not in full accord with the divine spirit of truth and righteousness—Satan and his servants) shall have been destroyed in the second death. Then the mediatorial reign of Christ will terminate, and he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father.

Notice that, in harmony with the context, verse 22 should read, "As *all in Adam* die, even so *all in Christ* shall be made alive." This passage is very frequently misused to prove the everlasting salvation of all men irrespective of their acceptance of Christ as their Redeemer and King. But, thus translated, this passage is in perfect accord with the remainder of the Bible, which everywhere declares that, "He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." —1 John 5:12; John 3:36. The Greek text also supports this rendering, and no other view of verse 22 could be reconciled with the context, verses 23, 24.

The difficulty with many, however, is that they have never noticed the full sense of the words *life* and *made alive* in the Scriptures. The whole world is reckoned as already dead—because under sentence of death through Adam; and unless they eat (assimilate and appropriate by faith) the flesh (sacrificed humanity) of the Son of man, they have *no life* and can have *no life*. (John 6:53) And those who do so "eat" are said to pass from *death* unto *life* now, reckonedly, but the *actual making alive* of such, as stated in our text, will be in the Resurrection morning. And so it will be with the world in general during the Millennium: they will be *awakened* by the great Redeemer in order that each may have the offer of everlasting life, on condition of becoming Christ's, accepting his gracious work for them in the past and his regulations for their future. Thus they may "eat" his flesh— appropriating his merit and receiving thereby his strength and life. They will be accounted or reckoned as beginning to live from the time that they begin to "eat," but they will not be fully *alive*, perfect, until the close of the Millennial age of trial or testing.

THE BEGINNING OF OUR RESURRECTION

Question.—In regard to the resurrection of the Church, is it proper for us to consider this in any sense of the word beginning at the time of our consecration, and as progressing during the period of our sojourn in these mortal bodies, and as being complete when we awake in the Lord's likeness? or should we apply the word resurrection as concerns the church merely to that great change which will consummate our perfection in glory, honor and immortality?

Answer.—The Scriptures frequently refer to the church as not only having died to the world and the flesh, but as having already been quickened together with Christ, as already risen with him to walk in newness of life. (Col. 3:1; Rom. 6:11) This might, of course, be considered by many a figurative start to the resurrection life, but if we are reckoned as new creatures in Christ it implies that the old creature, the old nature, is dead, and, hence, that a new will, or nature, has been started, begotten—that the new creature which God proposes to raise up has started in its upward course. This in no sense of the word applies to a fleshly resurrection, but merely a rising of the spirit of the mind above earthly things to a relationship with the heavenly and spiritual, in which it is declared to be at rest and associated with Christ in heavenly conditions, merely waiting for the new spiritual body, which God has promised shall complete the new creation with such as are faithful to their obligations as new creatures in walking, not after the flesh, but after the spirit, to the extent of their ability.

It is not the flesh, either in the present or the future, that is to be raised, but the new creature, whose resurrection life is already started, and to which God will in due time give a body as it hath pleased him.

WHAT CONSTITUTES CHASTISEMENT?

Question.—I must ask you to set some of us right on the subject of chastisement as recorded in the 12th chapter of Hebrews. Your writings on the subject have been read, yet there are some here who cannot altogether harmonize the matter. It is contended on the one hand that the chastening of the Lord which we as sons must experience, according to your teaching, consists in the tribulation difficulties, the spoiling of our goods, our names, the breaking of ties of friendship which we have enjoyed, the willingness to be called fools for Christ's sake,—in short, the enduring of all things which Christ endured, and also some sickness and pain in the flesh.

It is contended on the other hand that that cannot be construed as the chastening of the Lord, since the word chastening means to correct, to set aright when we have erred; it is contended that all these things come to us because we have taken the right way, and that the closer we try to remain at the side of the Lord, and the more we cut loose from the world, the severer will be the persecutions, the more contempt will the world heap upon us, and the more will it scorn us, even as it scorned him. It is furthermore contended, that the chastening which, as sons of God, we must experience is directly of God, since the Scriptures (Heb. 12) declare so, and that the things mentioned before do not come to us at the hand of God, but are heaped upon us by Satan and the world; that these things must be expected and must be borne with patience, that thus we are polished, and are building character, and are being prepared for the place that we shall some day, by the grace of God, occupy in his glorious temple.

Now, all of this, it is contended, is as far from the chastening of the Lord as day is from night, since the one is from God and the other from Satan. Now, the chastening of the Lord is explained thus: the Apostle in his writing to the Hebrews (12th chap.) compares the spiritual with the fleshly, saying:— "Should we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live?" It is contended, therefore, that the chastening, which the sons of God must experience is a chastening of the new spiritual being, which is as yet only in its embryo, or begotten condition, and is yet to be developed. Being weak, it is sometimes overcome, but when it regains its position from the error or sin into which it had been lured, it is grieved, and as the Word declares, it is indeed chastened or corrected, causing it sorrow and pain; but which afterwards yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

Having come to the Father with grief and tears, and finding grace, it returns once more to its journey, rejoicing. Having learned the lesson and being rightly exercised by its experience it is more watchful and prayerful, and in the future yields more of the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

The question is asked: Was the stoning to death of Stephen a chastening of the Lord?

Answer.—Using the word *chastisement* in its broad sense of trial, or trying experience, we should say, Yes. Using the word chastisement in its narrower sense of penalty or correction for wrong-doing, our answer is, No. To my understanding the chastisements of the Lord include both of the kinds you specify—not only correction when we have erred from the way—the Lord's rod and staff disciplining us,—but, also the experiences which we receive along life's pathway when we are not straying, but seeking diligently to learn the lessons necessary to our preparation for the kingdom. The word "chastisements" and the word "corrections" amongst mankind generally carry with them the thought of previous transgressions, for which these are punishments; but this is not necessarily the limitation of thought contained in these words. As new creatures we are begotten to a new nature, which is far higher every way than our present nature; so that even if we were free from all human imperfections (and we are free to the extent that we are covered by the merit of Christ's righteousness) we would still need correction, that is, to be made right,

to be made fit, to be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light—the divine nature. These chastisements or corrections are in the nature of instructions and tests necessary for our development for the higher plane of life to which we have been called. Our Lord Jesus, for instance, was a son of God, and, if a son, then, as the Apostle says, he was chastened, "for what son is he that the Father chasteneth not? If ye be without chastisement, . . . then are ye bastards and not sons." (Heb. 12:7, 8) Our Lord Jesus was a true son, and hence had his share of chastisements. "The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed." (Isa. 53:5) While these chastisements and stripes were necessary for our redemption, they were necessary also to our Lord's preparation for the high station of glory, honor and immortality to which he was called. Thus we read that "he learned obedience by the things which he suffered." (Heb. 5:8) The sufferings or chastisements or corrections were necessary to his glorification. And so it is with us, his brethren: our sins are graciously covered through the merit of his sacrifice; by faith we are accepted as every whit whole, and by faith our sacrifices are accepted, "holy, acceptable unto God." (Rom. 12:1) Our chastisements, therefore, are not in the nature of penalties for the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh, which Jesus has graciously covered for us; but our standing as new creatures is on the perfect plane, and the majority, at least, of our chastisements, like those of the Master, our elder Brother, are disciplinary, and to the intent that we may be ultimately complete in him, meet for the "inheritance of the saints in light."

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

INFANT DAMNATION STILL BELIEVED

The movement for Presbyterian Creed revision, it should be remembered, is amongst those of the Northern Synods only. The Southern Presbyterians constitute a totally separate body of Presbyterians. (There is only *one body* of Christ.) In this connection note the following comment from the columns of the *Southwestern Presbyterian* in criticism of a published communication. The editorial note follows:—

"Note by the Editor in Charge.—The statement in the above communication, that 'our church as a whole doth verily believe' that it 'is taught in God's Holy Word that all infants dying in infancy were given by the Father to the Son in the councils of the Deity before the foundation of the world, as a part of the reward of his atoning sacrifice,' is wholly unwarranted. The church's belief is found, not in the deliverance of one Assembly, but in its Standards alone, and not until these are changed is any one warranted in saying that the church believes in the salvation of all infants dying in infancy. As the Standards are now, they are absolutely silent on that question, because the Scriptures are silent on it. We may hope that it is so, but the Scriptures do not declare it. When the Psalmist says: 'The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies' (Psalm 58:3), it does seem to imply the possibility that the children of the wicked perish with their parents.

"But our Standards do neither affirm or deny it. They only affirm, as the Jackson Assembly declares, that the *elect* who die in infancy, 'are saved in a different manner from adult persons who are capable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word,' leaving it an open question whether the children of the wicked are saved or not, inasmuch as this is one of the things of which Moses says: 'The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children, that we may do all the words of this law.'—Deut. 29:30."

Closely in line with the above is the following from the editorial columns of the *Central Presbyterian*, (Richmond, Va.):—

"Presbyterians are becoming united on the old subject of limitation of the atonement. In relation to the merciful inclination of God, it was unquestionably co-extensive with our race. In relation to his *justice*, it was designed for believers exclusively. The whole trouble has always been due to our incapacity to reconcile the *sentiments* and *purposes* of an infinite being. The Bible does not confound them. It assures us that 'God does not willingly afflict' his people, and yet he does afflict them. Of course, he may unwillingly destroy his enemies. But we cannot comprehend such facts, any more than the modes of divine justice."

These editors, be it remembered, are advanced thinkers, too, as compared with the masses of their readers. How sadly they lack the "key of knowledge!" (Luke 11:52) Referring to the Scripture quotations of the first (Psa. 58:3); how evident it is that it is true—that heredity marks everybody, more or less, from birth! The difficulty is a certain theological theory, which has no Scripture foundation—which claims that every infant is *immortal* and that the present life, long or short, favorable or unfavorable, constitutes the only chance ever to be enjoyed for reforming character and becoming fit for a happy eternity, and hence that children of the wicked, conceived and born in sin and depravity (as are all mankind, more or less), are unprepared for an eternity of bliss, and, hence, must spend that eternity without bliss—in pain and horrors. Grant the false premise and it does not take long to reach this conclusion. But let these same reasonable men rid their minds of the false premise and go by Scripture alone, and they would have no difficulty in reaching a reasonable and Scriptural view of the subject. They should note that no infants are born immortal, but that the truth is as the Scriptures declare, God "only hath immortality." Then they will be prepared to see that death does not mean life; and that destroy does not mean preserve: that when God declared, "All the wicked will he *destroy*," he meant it. When he declared, "The soul that sinneth it shall *die*," he meant it. The penalty upon father Adam and through him upon all his race is a *death* penalty; and children and all die because of Adam's sin (Rom. 5:12); and the worst, therefore, that could befall the children of the wicked would be —death.

Now, then, what is the Scriptural hope for the children of the wicked? We answer that it is exactly the same as for the children of the saints, viz., that Christ Jesus our Lord tasted death for every man when he tasted death for Adam; because all were under Adam's sentence of condemnation to death. It was one man's sin of disobedience that brought the penalty upon all; and, consequently, the ransom of the one was the ransom of all; as it is written: "He is the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins [the church's sins], and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." The children of the wicked were, therefore, redeemed in the most absolute sense;—from the entire condemnation of death. Indeed, none but sinners were redeemed, for "Christ died for the ungodly;" —all are ungodly, all sinners; hence, all *die*, and all need to be redeemed, else they would have no hope of a *resurrection*.

In the Millennium (the resurrection age) infants of believers would have a little the start of infants of unbelievers, in that they will have less depraved organisms when awakened; but under the grand raising-up processes then at work, such disadvantages would soon be overcome, and all will be brought to a full knowledge of the truth and to full opportunities for complete *restitution* (Acts 3:19-23) back to all that was lost by father Adam for himself and all his posterity. In that day it shall no more be a proverb that the fathers ate a sour grape [sin] and all the children's teeth are set on edge; for then "every man [who shall die] shall die for his own iniquity"—"the soul [person] that sinneth it shall die."—Ezek. 18:2, 4; Jer. 31:29, 30.

How reasonable are God's ways! and how plainly they are stated in the Word,—for those who have the eye and ear of faith;—to those who are hearkening to the divine Word rather than to the creeds of the dark ages.

In respect to the second quotation: It shows how confusing and unsatisfactory error is to its warmest votaries. Honest minds and good hearts strive in vain to reconcile the idea of *justice* and *good sentiments* and *purposes* with the creating of millions of creatures, with the foreknowledge that for any cause their existence would be everlasting misery,—torture. The marvel is that intelligent men will stick to such inconsistencies—simply because they are old and hoary. Why is it that they cannot go back to the still older theory of the Bible,—beautiful, simple, reasonable, grand? It is because Satan is blinding them with fear;—fear that good, reasonable, just thoughts toward God and interpretations of his Word are delusions of the adversary? Ah, yes; the Lord foresaw it all, and declares, "Their fear toward me [is not of me; I have neither done nor said anything to merit such sentiments, but] is taught by the precept of men."—Isa. 29:13.

THE BIBLE DEFENDED BY PROF. G. F. WRIGHT, LL.D.

"Since the Bible is a revelation through the medium of human language it must be interpreted in accordance with accepted literary standards. It is addressed to persons who are

supposed to have ordinary understanding and common sense, and who can justly be expected to give it the treatment which would be considered fair in the interpretation of any other literary document. The interest in the Bible is largely kept up by the fact that it is so varied in form that it never becomes monotonous. We find in it not only history, biography and genealogies, but poetry, parables, fables, highly-wrought rhetorical addresses and appeals and prophetic forecasts of the future.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE GENERAL

"One of the most important rules of interpretation is that ordinary language should be interpreted according to the known nature of the subject. It is always assumed that the person addressed has a considerable amount of knowledge which can be made the basis of instruction and further enlargement. This can be illustrated by an analysis of almost any sentence which can be written. When, for an example, the word 'Bring' is used, it has a wide latitude of possible meaning, which is limited in each instance by the implied but unexpressed conditions known to the speaker and the person addressed. If it is said, Bring me the book, the book will be brought by main force. If the judge says, Bring in the prisoner, the sheriff will come in with the prisoner walking at his side, impelled only by such show of force as is necessary to overcome the reluctance of the prisoner's will. If a mother says to her son, Bring your friend home with you to tea, he would be a very strange boy who should think that, in order to obey the command, he must take his friend up in his arms and carry him, or gird on a sword and pistol to compel attendance. By a simple invitation he will accomplish the purpose. All the force necessary is that which will accomplish the object.

"No greater mistake can be made in the interpretation of language than always to insist upon the strictly literal or etymological meaning of the words. All language is more or less figurative. Words come to mean what usage and the context put into them and make them mean. For example, the word 'manufacture' literally means made by hand—that being the significance of the Latin words composing it. But now hardly anything is made by hand. Yet we still go on speaking of manufacturing all sorts of goods and wares.

"A hundred years ago the coats we wore were literally manufactured. The wool was shorn from the sheep by hand, and our grandmothers carded it into rolls, spun it into yarn and wove it into cloth by hand. Now, on the contrary, the wool is shorn from sheep's backs in Australia by a machine, and is dumped into steamers by great hoisting apparatus, and unloaded at Liverpool in the same manner, and is thence transported by rail to one end of a great 'manufactory,' so called, where it is delivered over to machinery of various and complicated character, which turns it out at the other end cloth ready made for the tailor. He would be a dull interpreter and a carping critic, who should insist that any one who said that this cloth was manufactured by Jonas Barnes & Co., must be supposed to mean that Jonas Barnes & Co. actually made the cloth by hand. Everybody knows that Jonas Barnes can be correctly said to manufacture all the cloth that comes out of his manufactory, even though he does nothing but sit in his office and issue commands. For it is a well known principle of interpretation that a person is properly said to do whatever he accomplishes by his agents. General Grant captured General Lee at Appomattox, though he did not himself fire a gun, and was far in the rear of the army when the actual capture was made. But he is properly said to have done whatever was accomplished by the army which he directed.

BIBLE LANGUAGE FIGURATIVE

"Applying these and other similar principles to the interpretation of the Bible will at once relieve its writers of a great number of absurd charges of ignorance and inconsistency, and unfold a profound, harmonious and exalted conception of nature which may well command the admiration of all classes who are privileged to read and study it.

"The poetical imagery which describes the attributes and actions of the Creator is so bold and striking that it would seem impossible for any person of common sense to degrade it to the low level of mere literality. When the sacred writer speaks of the Lord as accomplishing something by the strength of his right arm,' or of his 'causing his face to shine upon us,' it would seem impossible that any person of ordinary experience in the use of language should insist that these expressions necessarily implied that the Divine Being exists in human form and actually has a face and arms and fingers like a man, even though the Psalmist does speak of the heavens as 'the work of God's fingers.' With equal reason the mere literalist would have to say that the Psalmist thought the Lord had feathers and wings, since it is said that he shall cover those that trust him 'with his feathers,' and shelter them 'under his wings,' while a little before in this Psalm (Psalm 90) it is represented that the Almighty has a 'shadow' under which his children may abide.

"All this emphasizes the fact that human nature has remained practically unchanged from the beginning. The use of language, which is the most characteristic peculiarity of man, has been practically the same in all ages. In early times, as in the present, men knew how to use figurative and rhetorical language, so as to make it effective, and it is altogether probable that they had that knowledge of the nature of things derived from the ordinary experiences of life, which we call commonsense, and which enabled them to understand that when God is spoken of as their 'Sun' and 'Shield' and 'Strong Tower' the words conveyed an exalted spiritual significance far richer and fuller than their mere literal meaning.

"When, therefore, we approach those portions of the Bible which deal more directly and specfically with the constitution of the universe and the creation of the world, we need not be surprised to find language used in the manner which is fitted to give us a most exalted conception of the significance of the facts without either tying us down to the dull literal meaning of words or necessarily conveying false conceptions to sincere and thoughtful inquirers."

MEANING OF BIG INCREASE IN THE SOCIALIST VOTE

We clip the following extracts from the Chicago *Record-Herald*:—

"No one thing in the recent election attracted more attention than the great increase in the Socialist vote. People of all classes have been asking one another, What does it mean? What was the cause which led 300,000 people to give their votes for the principles of Socialism, and what does it portend for the future? The most diverse interpretations have been put upon it. To some it is a threatened danger, to others a promise of hope. All admit that from now on Socialism will be a factor that must be dealt with in the political struggles of America. A party which holds 300,000 votes and elects five members to the legislature in Montana, and three in Massachusetts, and comes close to election in a large number of other places, and unlike the Populist party and most other so-called minor parties, it shows no tendency to concentration in special localities, and is certain to be a force worthy of consideration.

"This sudden growth does not owe its origin wholly to the active propaganda which has been carried on. On the contrary, the growth of this propaganda is in itself almost as much a sign of the growth of the conditions which produce Socialism as it is the cause of the Socialist vote. . . .

ENTERS TRADES UNIONS

"One of the most striking phases of its recent development has been its sudden growth among the trades unions. Everyone who has paid the slightest attention to events in the labor world must have noticed the marvelous increase in the membership and strength of organized labor. But step by step with this growth in the size and power of the unions has gone a corresponding increase of the Socialist sentiment within those unions. The declaration of the 150,000 members of the American Labor Union for Socialism at their convention in Denver a few months ago and the close vote at the American Federation of Labor at New Orleans much more recently are two instances in point.

"The Socialist party, therefore, arises as a distinctly class party. It does not arise as a result of preaching class hatred, as its enemies would declare, but arises because capitalism has developed class antagonisms. So far from seeking to perpetuate class hatred, the Socialist party is the only party which distinctly sets itself about abolishing the class antagonisms which give rise to class hatred by the only possible means—the abolition of the economic antagonisms from which these classes arise. . . .

GREAT GAINS EXPECTED

"*The Socialist party may be expected to make tremendously rapid gains within the next few years* because of the fact that the extremely rapid evolution to which reference was previously made has caused the economic development of this country to run far ahead of the propaganda movement of Socialism. The economic development has now made the interest of the mass of workers identical with the aims and objects of the Socialist party. It only remains for the propagandists of Socialism to point out and demonstrate this fact to this mass of workers to secure their support. This it is doing at a very rapid rate. The circulation of its publications is growing at an almost astounding rate, while the number of agitators grows even faster.

"Moreover, there is this which differentiates the Socialist party from every other party, in that practically every member is a propagandist and the work of carrying on campaigns

is not left to the party machine. For these reasons the rapid growth of Socialism in the last election is but a foretaste of what the future will bring forth."

* * *

The German Kaiser has just surrendered to the Agrarian party, and, contrary to his preference, has agreed to a tariff on food;—to escape the Socialist dilemma and preserve the farming element as his friends.

ROMAN CATHOLIC TRIUMPHS

A pominent Protestant writer and church historian, *Dr. Kolde,* discussing the recent progress of Romanism, in the *Neue Kirchliche Leitschrift* (Leipsic), says:—

"Few people, and only those who study modern facts in the light of church history, have any appreciation of the phenomenal advance made by the Catholic church during the last decades, especially as a power in the political world and in the conquests of new spheres of thought and life. It is by no means a pleasant thing for Protestants to contemplate; but it is an undeniable fact that not since the days of Innocent III. has the papal system unfolded such splendor and power as in the present time. Not the Catholic princes, but rather the Protestant rulers are the ones who are trying to surpass each other in honoring the shrewd sage now occupying the throne in the Vatican, although it is this same sage who has repeatedly called the Reformation a 'pest.'

"In other respects the church has grown phenomenally. Each year the number of those who swell the ranks of the religious orders grows by the thousands, and in the German empire alone there are now 40,000 of these. Not since the days of the Reformation have these orders, especially of the Jesuits, developed the strength they evince in our days. The Catholics control the parliaments and they make our laws, and in countries like Germany, where church and state are united, they even pass the laws regulating the affairs of the Protestant church. With every day the principle is gaining more and more ground that it is not ability and efficiency, but the attitude toward the Catholic church, that opens the way for candidates for positions in the state service. The statesmen of Europe are largely and in many cases mostly influenced in their international politics by the views that may prevail in the Vatican; and what is more remarkable, that which the ambitious Innocent III. failed to attain, and that against which even Catholic princes and bishops have constantly protested, namely, the assigning of the position of judge on international difficulties to the Pope—this has been first voluntarily yielded to the Vatican by the leading Protestant powers of Europe, Prussia and Germany, the former of these also having been the first to recognize the Curia as a political power on equal footing with other powers, by sending an ambassador to the Vatican."

WHAT JUDGE GROSSCUP SEES

"It is certain that, as never before in our history, there are several millions of men and women brought up in the industrial trades who are now without property interest in the trades they follow. No less a man than Webster said that the freest of governments will not long be acceptable if the tendency of the laws be to create a rapid accumulation of property in a few hands, rendering a majority of the population dependent.

"If this be true, it has come about that the same years which brought us riches and greatness as a nation have brought with them an internal disorder, which, if allowed to go on, will endanger the stability of the government itself."—*Judge Grosscup at Lincoln, Neb., Dec.* 15, '02.

DEPICTED HORRORS OF HELL

London, Dec. 7.—A dispatch from Rome to the *Daily Mail* says:—

"A scene, which few who witnessed will ever forget, was enacted at the church of San Carlo Alle Mortelle, in Naples, today. A sermon was preached on 'Hell.' The priest in charge arranged a realistic accompaniment to the preacher's words, and had men concealed in various parts of the church. Some were in the sacristy, some in the confessionals, and others behind the altars. The church was darkened. The preacher depicted in vivid colors the horrors of hell. At proper moments there were flashes of blood-red light, and the concealed men rattled chains, screamed, howled and made other hideous noises, supposed to typify the torture of the damned. The congregation was largely composed of the ignorant and peasant class. They are superstitious to a degree. The performance was entirely too realistic for them.

"Women began to get hysterical, laughed, cried and screamed. Soon the entire congregation was in the throes of abject terror. Men, cowering with fear, ran to the doors, burst them open and fled. Panic then seized all, and a terrific rush was made to the streets. Women and children fainted with fright. Men and women fought like beasts to escape. Many were injured, some seriously. The police were called, but the affair had ended. A police order has been issued preventing any further sermons on 'Hell' with such terrible trimmings."

"THERE WERE GIANTS IN THOSE DAYS"

"Who is J. Pierpont Morgan? He is not only the world's king of finance today, but the greatest financier in all history.

"He has a voice in the control of properties capitalized at $6,488,500,000—more wealth than was ever before in the hands of one man. This amount is greater by over $1,000,000,000 than the entire annual revenue of the forty-three principal nations of the world. It is greater by almost $2,000,000,000 than all the world's gold, coined and uncoined. It is greater by almost $6,000,000,000 than the gold coin and gold certificates in the United States Treasury, and the amount ($550,000,000) in that treasury at present is unprecedented.

"As the head of the world-wide transportation trust, with 16 steamship lines and 44 railroad systems, with 300 of the largest steamships and 30,000 passenger and freight trains, the two branches representing a land mileage of 108,500 and a sea tonnage of 12,000,000, he is the grand stage-driver and ferryman of the world.

"He is, says the *World,* the one man on earth whose life has been insured by English investors and speculators for $2,000,000 who paid therefor a premium of 9 per cent. The same fraternity insured the life of Queen Victoria for $2,000,000."—*Banking World.*

WITHDRAWAL LETTERS

Those of our friends who have been considering the propriety of their obedience to the call, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4; 2 Cor. 6:17; Psa. 50:5), may be hesitating in the obedience because of uncertainty as to how best to inform their congregational associates of the scriptural reasons for their withdrawal from the nominal system. For the benefit of these, we have on hand in good supply a form of Withdrawal Letter, worded plainly, but kindly, and well calculated to arouse greater interest in the same precious truths which have made us free with "the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free." The letter is so arranged that the addition of signature and date makes it a personal one to all to whom it is sent. Each member of the congregation should receive one, with one or two appropriate tracts, enclosed in a Missionary Envelope. We are pleased to supply *free* plenty of these Letters, envelopes and tracts to serve all your friends.

TO FILL A LONG FELT WANT

From time to time friends have enquired whether we supplied stationery suitable for correspondence with other friends. To meet this demand we have prepared and have now in stock a good supply of blue bond letter paper, 8½x11 inches, with appropriate scriptural heading. This we supply at 25c per lb., postage 15c. extra. A pound contains a little over 100 sheets. With the Missionary Envelopes this will constitute excellent material for correspondence.

"HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD"

1 THESSALONIANS 5:14-28.—JAN. 25.

Our lesson is a summary statement of the proper attitude for the Lord's people to maintain in order that they may grow in grace and through faithfulness finally come off conquerors through their Redeemer. Although addressed to the saints at Thessalonica, these noble words have been a source of strength, encouragement and discipline to the faithful in Christ Jesus from their writing to the present time. No child of God can afford to ignore nor to neglect these words of divine counsel, and in proportion as each of us gives heed to them our lives will surely be the more Christ-like, and we will thus be the more pleasing to the Lord, and eventually make our calling and election sure to joint-heirship with him in the Millennial king-

dom, and its glories and its service to the world of mankind. Let us take up these apostolic injunctions seriatim.

Not the elders alone are exhorted by the Apostle, as though they were a separate class, exercising control and treating the brethren as their wards; he addresses the "brethren"—the entire church, including the sisters also. But this does not signify that the counsel would not apply specially to the elders; because they were selected as amongst the brethren most advanced in Christian doctrine and practice, and as the representatives of the church, to specially look after the interests of the Lord's flock. These apostolic words apply to each member of the flock in proportion to his capacity and ability, but would naturally come with special force to the elders who, under God's providence, had the oversight of his church, "to feed the flock." (Acts 20:28) While, therefore, all the brethren are to see to the carrying out of the injunctions here given, the elders in every church should feel a special responsibility respecting them—a responsibility derived from the position they occupy as representatives of the church,—its standard-bearers.

The unruly are here contrasted with the feeble-minded or faint-hearted and the weak. The divine arrangement is full of order as well as full of liberty; and, rightly understood, liberty can best be conserved by order; and order best be maintained through a reasonable recognition of personal liberty. The mistake frequently made, not only by earthly law-givers and disciplinarians, but also in the church of Christ, is along the line of extremes, either in one or the other of these directions. Some misunderstand liberty to mean lawlessness, disorder, unruliness. Others with equally good intentions, no doubt, are disposed to carry order and obedience to rules to such an extent as to dwarf the individual liberties of the flock. Great grace is needed along this line, to prevent friction amongst the Lord's people—to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bonds of love and peace.

We are not to have such false ideas of personal liberty as would ignore rules, law, order, in the assembles of the Lord's people; and those disposed to be unruly, self-conscious, thrusting themselves forward, without the request of the church, need to be held in check—to be "warned"—to be shown that their course is contrary to the spirit of the Lord and all the arrangements instituted by the apostles, his representatives. They need to be "warned" also that their course would mean injury to the church, instead of blessing and peace and joy and development; and injury to themselves, in that it would develop in them a combativeness or self-esteem, already too large, and might thus not only work injury to the cause, but hinder themselves from attaining the character-likeness necessary to a share in the kingdom.

But while some might need thus to be warned and held in check, others, faint-hearted and weak, would need aid, support, encouragement;—naturally backward, diffident, lacking in combativeness and self-esteem, they need to be pushed to the front a little, in order to bring out what talents they really possess, for their own encouragement and for the blessing also of the entire household of faith.

"Be patient toward all," seems to imply that the better balanced amongst the Lord's people should look with sympathy upon and exercise patient forbearance toward the classes above mentioned;—not only toward the weak and those who lack courage, but toward *all;* including those who have too much courage and self-push. The Scriptures repeatedly admonish us, "Ye have need of patience," and day by day the advanced children of the Lord realize the truthfulness of this, and come to appreciate patience as one of the chief Christian graces. (1) Growth in knowledge helps us to grow in this grace of patience, for as we appreciate more and more the heavenly Father's patience with us it helps us to apply the same principle toward others. (2) As we come to realize the great disaster that is upon our race as a whole—our fallen condition and how the fall has affected some more in one manner and others more in another—some chiefly mentally, some chiefly physically, and some chiefly morally, it enlarges our sympathy toward our fellow-creatures, and thus increases our *patience* in dealing with them. This is particularly true in respect to the household of faith, in which we recognize amongst those whom God has graciously called, some more blemished, perhaps, than ourselves in some particulars—though we may be more imperfect in others. The thought that our heavenly Father has favored and called anyone should make us extremely careful how we would co-operate with the Lord in respect to the call, and be as helpful as possible to all those who are seeking to walk with us in the footsteps of our Lord in the narrow way. We certainly should have special patience, therefore, with the brethren.—Rom. 14:15; 1 Cor. 8:11.

"See that none render evil for evil unto any." This exhortation has a special force when we remember how much evil treatment was heaped upon the followers of our Lord at that time; and that the writer himself, as well as those specially addressed, had suffered much on account of their faithfulness in dispensing the Word of the Lord, the Word of life, the good tidings. The exhortation means that the Lord's followers are not to attempt to retaliate upon their enemies by doing them evil in return, or in any manner to "get even with them." The Lord's exhortation is that we seek to render good in return for the evil we receive, and includes our language as well as our conduct, we are not to give word for word, railing for railing, accusation for accusation, slander for slander any more than blow for blow. It includes also our very thoughts, for we are not even to render anger for anger, malice for malice, envy for envy. Two evils can never make a good—two wrongs will never make a right. Our sympathy for our blinded enemies is to cultivate our patience and forbearance toward them in thought, word and deed.—1 Pet. 2:21-23.

The Lord's people, so far from ever turning aside to render railing for railing or evil for evil, are uniformly to *"pursue that which is good"*—that which is right, that which the Lord approves. This will mean that each member of the royal priesthood will pursue righteousness to the extent of his ability—pursue every good and noble sentiment, and seek to live as nearly as possible up to the high standard of righteousness, perfection, exemplified absolutely in our Lord. This pursuit of goodness is to be maintained not only amongst the brethren, where all are professing the same pursuit, but also toward others—in our dealings with the world. Some of the world can learn more of the Gospel through witnessing our avoidance of evil and our constant pursuit of righteousness, than by anything we can say to them;—and possibly as they discern the new life in us they may gradually come to have an "ear to hear" the message of good tidings which has wrought this change in us.

The worldly spirit does not approve this part of the Apostle's counsel, but urges, rather, that we should treat others as they treat us—that we should "give as good as we get,"—meaning that we should give as bad as we get. By way of saying as good a word as they can in their own favor along these lines they sometimes accuse the Lord's followers of cowardice. Courage is one of the noble qualities of humanity, and it is quite a trial to some to be considered timid or lacking in courage; and to such this enjoined restraint of word and act is a particular trial. It is not true, however, that the Lord's counsel tends to effeminacy or lack of courage. This matter is well stated in the language of another, as follows:—

"One feature which stands out clear in the society founded by Christ and his apostles is the extraordinary heroism which was shown in the face of death and tortures, not only by men, but by feeble women and tender children. It amazed the heathen magistrates who were striving after *fortitude* by the aid of philosophy. It amazed the wild savages, who mistook gentleness for cowardice, when they found it was harder to terrify the missionary who came with the Gospel than the invader who came in battle array. Quiet endurance may be *more heroic* than violent resistance, and the Christian law of bearing personal insults and injuries meekly tends to the development of the highest courage and truest manliness. There is nothing more courageous, more heroic, in all history than living up to this precept."

"Rejoice evermore" is the same exhortation that in our last lesson we saw the Apostle sending to the Philippians. The Christian's rejoicing is not hysterical, but founded on established principles, upon promises and comforting assurances of the divine Word which stands firm amid all the storms and trials and shocks of life.

"Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks." Only somewhat advanced pupils in the school of Christ are prepared clearly to comprehend this exhortation. Having surrendered their wills and all of the interests of the present life to the Lord, exchanging earthly interests for heavenly interests, the Lord's people are less disposed than others to pray unceasingly for *earthly good things.* Having set their affections on things above, their prayers are in respect to those things,—the heavenly robe, the heavenly food, the heavenly favor. Their prayers are specially for such leadings of divine providence and such assistance of divine grace as will enable them to rejoice always in such experiences as their gracious Lord may deem best for their spiritual development. More and more they find their prayers to consist of thanksgiving for blessings already received, as well as for those yet to come, which they grasp by the hand of faith.

Their prayers are without ceasing, in that, having the condition of heart which is in fellowship with the Lord and fully devoted to the doing of his will, they not only implore

his blessing at the beginning of each day, and present their thanks at the close of each day, but in all of life's affairs they seek to remember that they have consecrated their all to the Lord, and by faith look up to him in all of the affairs of life; —and in proportion to the importance of their undertakings they, by faith, realize the association of God's providence with all the interests of life and give thanks accordingly. This is the will of God concerning us;—he wills that we live in such an attitude of constant regard for his will and for his blessing;—and he wills it in respect to us because it will be the condition most favorable to our progress in the narrow way, and which will best assist us in making our calling and election sure.

Having stated succinctly the church's proper attitude toward the Lord to be one of continued rejoicing, prayer and thanksgiving and acceptance of his divine providences, the Apostle next briefly admonishes them respecting their attitude toward each other in the church, in their feasting together on the Word of the Lord;—saying,

"Quench not the spirit.
"Despise not prophesyings.
"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.
"Abstain from every form of evil."

By following these admonitions, their fellowship in the Lord would be the more profitable—they would, as a congregation of the Lord's followers, be helped onward the more toward the grand standard to which we are called. The spirit of the Lord amongst his people is compared to "a flame of sacred love" for the Lord and all connected with his cause: this flame is enkindled through the divine message in each one individually, when begotten of the holy spirit, and appertains, therefore, to the church collectively, under the guidance of that spirit. In proportion as the church grows in knowledge and in love and in fellowship with the Lord this "flame of sacred love" will make it a light in the world,— as a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid. This is a different figure from the use of fire as a symbol of destruction.

True, the flame of sacred love does not consume and destroy sin, but sympathy with sin; sin is not a part of the new creature, which opposes it and desires to have it consumed,— that the light of righteousness and truth may shine the more brightly. This "flame of sacred love" may, indeed, consume our mortal bodies, as living sacrifices in the service of the truth: but with such a consumption the new mind is fully in accord, and rejoices, realizing that it has in heaven an enduring habitation, and counting it all joy to be reckoned worthy to suffer for the Lord's cause. The more this "flame of sacred love" burns, individually and collectively in the church, the greater will be the progress in all good things. Hence we are to be specially on guard, that our words and conduct and the general management of the interests of Zion in our midst shall permit this spirit of love to have free course in all our hearts and lives—that it be not quenched either with false doctrines or forms and ceremonies, or too rigid rules or by worldly spirit or by cares of this life or by any other thing, circumstance or condition under our control.

The church is not to despise prophesyings: the Apostle does not mean that we are not to despise the prophecies of the holy men of old who spoke as they were moved by the holy Spirit—it would be unnecessary to caution the church on that subject. The exhortation is, not to despise prophesyings that may be done in our midst. As we have previously seen, the gift of prophecy in the sense of foretelling coming events was to some extent in the church in the Apostle's day, as one of the gifts of the spirit, to mark out the Lord's people and to assist in establishing them at a time when the inspired messages of the Lord were unavailable. We find, however, that the Apostle frequently used this word "prophecy" in respect to *public utterance*, declamation, preaching. The early churches were accustomed to having general gatherings for their mutual assistance and upbuilding, and may have been in danger of thinking more of the gifts of miracles and tongues than of connected and logical discourse respecting the truth. The Apostle points out that without discarding the other blessings, this one should not be despised—our Lord was a preacher; the apostles were preachers, and the Lord has since raised up instructors amongst his people. Hence, such service should not be despised or ignored.

We live in a time when the very reverse of this is true; when the danger is rather that too much time and too much attention may be given to preaching, and not sufficient to the other methods of inculcating truth and encouraging the Lord's flock, "edifying and building up yourselves in the most holy faith"—when too much reliance is apt to be placed upon a leader and a connected discourse.

"Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." However much they should ever come to respect prophesyings, or public preaching, the Lord's people should learn proportionately not to receive what they might hear without proper examination and criticism: they should prove all things that they hear, should exercise discrimination of mind, as to what is logically and scripturally supported, and what is mere conjecture and possibly sophistry. They should prove what they hear, with a view to holding fast everything that stands the test of the divine Word, and shows itself to be in accordance with the holy spirit; and they should as promptly and thoroughly reject whatever will not stand these tests. Alas! the Lord's people today greatly need to give attention to this exhortation; for much is being presented in the name of the Lord and as the teaching of his Word that is neither logical nor scriptural—that is supported neither by the letter nor the spirit of the Word;—much that is not good, and should be rejected. With such a discrimination prevailing amongst the Lord's consecrated ones, how much of the chaff of nominal "orthodoxy" would be rejected, and what a hungering and thirsting and searching there soon would be for the good Word of God, that would stand these tests! Let us diligently heed the Apostle's exhortation on this point.

"Abstain from every *form* of evil" (Rev. Ver.) gives the Apostle's thought. There are various evils which present themselves; some in their true hideousness, and some under a cloak of hypocrisy—some openly and boldly admitting their evil character and endeavoring to decoy the Lord's people into sin; others, garbing themselves as angels of light, would seek to mislead and to deceive. The exhortation is that everything that is evil, whether it have a good form or a bad form, is to be resisted and opposed. We may not say with some, "Let us do evil that good may follow." The Lord's people must be loyal to the *principles* of righteousness, under any and all circumstances. To do otherwise would be surely to undermine the character which they are seeking to build up.

To abstain from every *appearance* of evil is another thought —a different one from what the Apostle's words in the original would warrant; nevertheless, they represent a sound principle. We surely should abstain not only from evil things, whatever their form or garb, but we should abstain so far as possible from doing things that we know to be good, which our friends or neighbors might misunderstand and consider to be evil things. The spirit of a sound mind dictates that not only evil in its every form, but everything that has an evil appearance, even, should be avoided that our influence for the Lord and the truth may be the greater.

In closing, the Apostle pronounces his benediction. It is an invocation—the expression of his heart's desire on their behalf—that the God of *peace* would sanctify them wholly. He thus emphasizes the fact that God is not a God of confusion, anarchy, turmoil and disturbance, but a God of peace; and that in proportion as we are taught of him in the school of Christ we will become lovers of peace, and the peace of God will dwell in us and will abound in us more and more, and cause us to be not unfruitful in regard to holy character, and will make us advocates and promoters of peace in our words and deeds. As it is written, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." Peace in the heart, manifesting itself in the look and word and conduct, is, as the Apostle intimates, an evidence of whole or complete setting apart, and that God's spirit has come into such a sanctified heart and is filling it with his peace, the peace of God which passeth all understanding.

"And may your spirit, soul and body be preserved entire, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (R. V.) The Apostle could mean this only in respect to the church, as a whole, and not concerning the individual members: because he surely did not expect the Christians at Thessalonica without exception to live until the presence of the Lord, even as he did not himself expect to live until that time, and so declared. (2 Tim. 4:7, 8; 2 Pet. 1:12-15) The Apostle is not, therefore, to be understood as speaking of the spirit and soul and body of each individual Christian at Thessalonica, but respecting the spirit of the church, the soul of the church, and the body of the church. In other words, his desire was that the church at Thessalonica might continue to the full end of the Gospel age as a noble and faithful congregation of the Lord's body, full of his spirit and courageous in his work. As a matter of fact, we know that the Apostle's good wishes, or prayer did not come true; for this congregation, like the others he planted, died out: not heeding with sufficient care his injunctions and exhortations, not proving all things, not holding fast the good, not abstaining from evil, not being sanctified wholly, the spirit of the Lord in their midst was quenched, and as a congregation it died, or ceased to be—the

light having blessed and confirmed some, passed on to other quarters, seeking those "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."*

"Faithful is he that called you, who will also do it." The fact that the Thessalonica church has not been kept in accordance with the Apostle's prayer, is not to be charged to unfaithfulness on God's part, but to neglect and unfaithfulness on the part of those whom the Apostle addressed, or their successors in that congregation. So it is with every one of us who has been called of the Lord. It is for us to hear and to heed the Lord's message through his servants, if we would make our calling and our election sure. If not disposed to hear his message in the way he has sent it, the fault lies at our own door. Faithful is he who called us, who would rejoice to do for us abundantly better things than we could ask or think, if we accept his provisions in faith and follow the directions of his Word.

"Brethren, pray for us." There was nothing of the pope or lord about the Apostle—no feeling of such a superiority to the others of the Lord's flock that he could pray for them to their advantage, but needed not their prayers. Similar is the spirit of all who are in the proper relationship with the Lord—a spirit of humility and appreciation of all the household of faith, and of their petitions at the throne of grace—a realization that the humblest of the Lord's people has access to the throne of heavenly grace, and may there obtain mercy and find strength to help in every time of need.

"Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss." This was the ancient style of greeting, corresponding to our present style of saluting with the hand or with the hat or by shaking hands. The custom of men kissing each other is still followed in eastern countries. The Apostle's thought is that there should be thorough cordiality amongst all who claim membership in the body of Christ, and that this fellowship should be manifested by the accustomed form of greeting,—whatever reasonable form that might be. Possibly he meant—"I greet," etc., implying that he would love to be with them and greet them personally, and now did so by letter.

Before invoking the Lord's blessing upon the church, the Apostle charged most strongly that this epistle should not be considered as a private message or letter to those in whose care it was sent, but that it should be considered as his address to the entire company of the Lord's faithful, and should be read to them all. The Apostle seemed to fear that there might be a spirit of censorship amongst the leading brethren which might lead them to preserve his letter to themselves, and to dole it out second-hand to the church, either as a whole or such parts of it as in their judgment would be *prudent*. Such a spirit on the part of the elders in any church would be reprehensible. God's Word is for God's people, and whoever would hinder its flow would surely offend the Master himself. That the elders at Thessalonica were faithful is apparent from the fact that the epistle was delivered to the church. Some today need caution along this same line: many preachers and teachers have discerned in *The Plan of the Ages* the light of the Millennial dawn, but, instead of heralding it to others, have sought to hide it from the Lord's people that they might use it as a personal illuminant to cause themselves to shine before their flocks. They consider this cunning—"wise and prudent,"—forgetting that the Lord declares that he *hides* his deep things from the wise and prudent and reveals them unto babes. (Luke 10:21) True to our Lord's words, this class rarely makes much progress;—the truth passes on and ere long they are in comparative darkness;—because they received not the truth in the love of it, but in the love of self. (2 Thess. 2:10) Loyalty to the Lord and to his flock and to his truth, through whatever channel it comes, demands that it shall be heralded by each of us to the extent of our ability and in its purity and as speedily as possible,—consistent with the condition and interests of those for whom the Lord intended it—his flock. Shepherds who feed themselves and not the flock are warned by the Lord of his displeasure, and could not be expected to thrive spiritually, or otherwise to enjoy the light of the Lord's face.—Ezek. 34:2, 7-10.

* What is the Soul, What is the Spirit, and What is the Body of Man? is treated in MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. V, Chaps. 8 and 12

"THIS IGNORANCE GOD WINKED AT"

ACTS 17:22-34.—FEB. 1.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"He preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection."*

Persecution followed the Apostle to Berea, where we, in a previous lesson, left him teaching a very noble class of inquiring and searching minds. His enemies in Thessalonica discovered his whereabouts, and at once began to create a disturbance—no doubt believing that thus they were doing God service. The Apostle's own experience as a persecutor of the body of Christ must have helped him to very charitable views of those who so viciously pursued him. The evidences of coming trouble were so strong that the Berean friends feared to have him embark at a regular port, at which he might have been recognized, and the direction of his journey anticipated, and thus prejudices might have gone with him or before him into new fields; they, therefore, secretly hastened him to the near seashore where he obtained coastwise shipping for Athens. The Apostle, as the chief spokesman, "drew the fire" of his enemies to such an extent that their hatred seems to have been confined to him alone—not affecting Silas, his companion, nor Timothy, at this time his assistant or servant. The latter two were left behind, to strengthen and encourage the believers, whose faith already had been established.

Under these circumstances the Apostle arrived at Athens, once the world's capital in every sense of the word; but still its capital in respect to science and art and theology and schools of general instruction—its commercial and political influence having gone to Rome with the imperial control. To Athens came the youth of wealthy families of the world, and many others possessed of a special craving for wisdom,—to avail themselves of the teachers, studies and lectures—practically the only means of instruction at that time.

Without a miracle no other one of the apostles would have been competent to secure a hearing before the Athenian Council of the Areopagites—composed of the teachers of the various schools of learning, and generally speaking, of the reputedly wisest men of the world. That the Apostle Paul, without letters of introduction, without political or other influence, serving as such, should succeed in a few days in obtaining an invitation to address this august body of men, indicates clearly that he was a man of remarkable talent, as well as learning. These natural qualities in him were reinforced by the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of the divine revelation, the true Gospel. The Apostle lost no time in beginning his special work: true, he first made a general inspection of the chief features of the city's attractions, noting its numerous public statues to the gods, whose number Pliny gives as over three thousand in the time of Nero. It was while making this inspection of the city and considering how best he could launch the Gospel message there, that his attention was drawn to one altar erected "To the Unknown God." He kept this as a text for his principal effort when the time should be ripe, and meantime, as usual, he began his ministry by going into the Jewish synagogues; but apparently finding little interest here he resorted to the public squares and markets, and discussed religious topics with the numerous students and others who gathered there.

Amongst those who heard him were some of a cynical turn of mind who said, Let us listen to what this babbler is saying; the word "babbler" signifying seed-picker, inferentially meaning that the Apostle had gained a mere smattering of knowledge, picked up some seeds of thought from others of the great teachers, and was now attempting to set himself up as a teacher. Others, disposed to persecute, said, He seems to be a setter forth of strange gods;—for to set forth any strange gods in Athens, was a crime, it being held that they already had them in plenty, and that to admit that any one could present a new god of which the Athenian teachers knew nothing, would be an insult to their learning and evidently a fraud. This, together with the Apostle's talents, secured for him a hearing before the Areopagites, or Council of the Learned. It was this Council which had the power to sentence to death anyone who should attempt to set forth strange gods in Athens; and hence the Apostle's hearing before them was probably, more or less, in the nature of a trial for life, because he had been preaching Jesus—an unheard of god amongst the Athenians up to this time—and the resurrection.

The Apostle's theme is worthy of our notice. Under the divine guidance he seemed to have a way of approaching the pith of the Gospel most directly, and these words of our Golden Text, "Jesus and the resurrection," really embraced the whole of the Gospel preached. The world, under divine sentence, was dead or dying: the redemption price our Lord's ransom sacrifice, had just been paid, and the hope to be built upon his work and to be announced to the people was *the resurrection of the dead*—that our Lord's death was the purchase price for the sins of the whole world, and that as a result, in God's

due time, an awakening of the dead shall come, and eventually the full raising up to the perfection of life of all who will accept the Redeemer as their leader and guide. This is the gospel which should still be preached, but which, by reason of various errors that crept in during the dark ages, has been beclouded and forced out of its way to such an extent that remarkably few lay any stress whatever upon the grand doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; and some are even dropping from their teachings "the ransom for all" given by Jesus.

We can picture before our minds the Apostle addressing the Council of Mars' Hill, composed of "the noblest blood of Athens, the first politicians, the first orators, the first philosophers; accordingly the most august, not only of Athens, but of Greece, and, indeed, of the whole world, under whose supervision 'came the transactions of the popular assembly, religion, laws, morals and discipline.'" Now the Apostle had use for the text he had found. He must prove to these men that he was not the setter forth of a *new* theology, but an *old* one. He at once brought forth his argument, not in the discourteous language of our English Common Version, intimating that his auditors were ignorant and superstitious, but, on the contrary, in complimentary language, which we paraphrase: he said to them; —"I perceive that more than others you Athenians have respect for whatever is divine. The conviction of this came to me as passing through your city I beheld the various evidences of your devoutness, and amongst other altars noticed one with the inscription, 'To the Unknown God.' Information regarding this God I am setting forth. He is the God that made the world and everything therein, and is the Lord of heaven and earth, too great to dwell in any temples made with hands, for he is the Lord of heaven as well as earth; neither can he receive service at our hands, for he needs nothing which we have to give, but is the author of life and breath and all things; who himself created every nation of men dwelling throughout all the earth—and even all their affairs are subject to his regulations and appointments."

Thus did he set before them the greatness of the true God, in contrast with their numerous gods whom they feared or hated, reverenced or placated, and whose vices and frequent impotency they admitted. The Apostle thus brought his teachings within the rules and regulations, as being not a new teaching, but a fuller declaration of a God already recognized by his hearers. And indeed, so high, so noble, so great a thought of God, must have impressed his hearers favorably. We cannot doubt that the teachings of the Jews, supplemented by the Gospel presentations, have done much to lift the minds of men out of the deep degradation which came upon them soon after the flood, as explained by the Apostle.—Rom. 1:20-32.

A God who was not merely the God of one nation or of one city or of one precinct, but who had created all races and nations, and had had to do with the rise and fall of nations, was certainly a very different God from anything that had ever been heretofore suggested to the minds of these philosophers; for although the Jews had preached the same God, undoubtedly their presentation of him as the God of the Hebrews must have favored the impression that each nation had its own god or gods, demanding its worship, reverence, sacrifices, etc.

In verses 26, 27 the Apostle implies that the Lord's ordering of the national affairs had something to do with the propagation of the knowledge of himself, and so we find it has been. The bringing of the world under successive empires—the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman—had tended to unify the race to some extent, and to make more possible the promulgation of the gospel. During the Grecian period the Greek language was spread abroad throughout various lands, and it still maintained its supremacy as the language of the world, although the reins of government had passed to the hands of the Romans, under whose pushing, war-like power the world in general would be brought much closer together than it had ever been from the time of the confounding of tongues at Babel. All this had occurred at the proper juncture of time as concerned God's favor to Israel, according to the flesh, the birth of Jesus, his crucifixion and the gathering of the ripe "wheat" from that nation, and the scattering of the remainder. All these things were, under divine supervision, working in the interest of mankind, "that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us." The Apostle would assist his hearers in finding this true God, who was to be found of them, and whom they had indicated their desire to know when they erected the altar referred to.

Describing the true God further, the Apostle assured his hearers that none could live or move or have existence, even, aside from the power and good intent of this great God. His words are equally truthful whether we restrict them to the imperfect existence of the present time and the dying condition of the world, with but a spark of life, or whether we apply them in the fuller sense to the Lord's provision for the future by restitution processes and arrangements. Still wishing to offset the thought that his message was a new one, the Apostle declares that certain Grecian poets had practically expressed this thought in saying, "We are also his offspring." Carrying the mind, then, to the logical conclusion, he urges that if we are the offspring of God our thoughts respecting divinity should not lead us to make or to worship images of any kind, all of which are professedly of man's device.

The Apostle's *method* is worthy of our imitation. All wise people distrust novelty, and incline to say that whatever is valuable has long been. We, like the Apostle, should endeavor to show that the true Gospel is not a new theology, but the old theology; not a new Gospel, but the old Gospel,—the one foretold to Abraham; the one announced by the angels on Bethlehem's plains as "good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people;" the one declared by the Lord Jesus himself and by all his apostles. In proportion as we would show that errors prevail today, which had their origin in the "dark ages," we must show that we are not forging a new theory equally erroneous, but that we have discarded the errors of the dark ages, and have gone back to the first principles and precepts and instructions of the gospel, as announced by the Lord and his authorized representatives, the apostles.

An explanation was necessary as to why this great God who had created all nations, and was directing their welfare, had neglected to send word to the Athenians until now. The Apostle did not go into a full explanation of the matter, with which his hearers would not have sympathy—he did not attempt to show how God in the past had merely been giving the world lessons in respect to the wages of sin, neither did he mention how Abraham's seed had been selected as the line through which divine blessings were to be carried eventually to all the families of the earth, and that God had been dealing with the natural seed of Abraham for the preceding eighteen centuries, making types of them and through them illustrating the progress of the divine plan as it shall ultimately be carried out. He did not explain, either, how that Christ offered himself to this nation of Israel, and (in harmony with the divine foreknowledge) had been rejected, and that now God was seeking a spiritual seed of Abraham—spiritual Israelites—to take the place of the broken-off branches of the fleshly house. —Rom. 11.

He contented himself with the bare statement of the truth, that in times past God had "winked at" or overlooked or disregarded and paid no attention to the idolatries of the world, but that now the time was come for a change of dispensation; —that now God was sending his message to them, and to all who had ears to hear, commanding repentance from sin and turning from idolatries to true worship and righteousness. Quite possibly, though the account does not state it, the Apostle explained that the foundation or basis of this call to repentance was the fact that Christ had been a propitiation (satisfaction) for the sins of the whole world—clearing men thus from the original condemnation of death and alienation from God, and permitting the return to his favor of whomsoever would.

The word "because" commencing verse 31 has a special significance which should not overlooked. God calls upon all men to repent and reform, *because* he has appointed for them a day of judgment—a day of trial or testing. Not a trial for testing or judging whether or not they are imperfect and fallen, for this God already knows, even better than we do, and his Word expressly declares that "There is none righteous, no, not one." Such a trial, such a judgment ray, therefore, to see if any were righteous, would be a farce. The object of the day of trial or judgment referred to by the Lord is totally different from this.

It is to be a trial day or judgment day to see, to test, to prove which of the world of mankind desire fellowship with the Lord, desire to be obedient to him, desire to walk in his ways. The Millennial age is this trial day, and the Lord assures us that a full opportunity shall be granted to each and every member of the race to hear, to know, to comprehend his goodness, his love, his redemption of the world through Christ, and his willingness that they should come back into fellowship with him—back to a condition in which he could justly accord to them everlasting life. God could not reasonably command any to repent and return until the ransom was paid at Calvary, because it was his own law that had forbidden them to have fellowship with him, and that law must first be satisfied; and because he could not reward with life everlasting any who

would seek his face, until he had made provision through the death of Christ for the payment of the death penalty against the race and through his resurrection for the times of restitution.

It is a further part of this blessed assurance that the judgment or trial of the world will be "in righteousness"—under a reign of righteousness when the besetments of the adversary and his deceptions will be at an end, **and when, therefore,** a clear and explicit knowledge of the Lord **and of the truth will** fill the earth, as the waters cover the great deep. What a gracious gospel the Apostle had to preach! It was so good, indeed, that he had to be guarded in his expression of it;—too good for his hearers to appreciate, with their debauched ideas of the cruelty and perversity of the gods—even as it is too good to be appreciated today by those whose minds have been more or less confused by the horrible theological nightmares coming down to us from "the dark ages."

The Apostle was proceeding logically to show that the resurrection of Christ from the dead was God's assurance to all that he would ultimately carry out this great plan of blessing the world, by granting to each member of it an individual trial or judgment for life, under the favorable conditions of the Millennium: and that the resurrection of Christ was not only God's attestation to men that his sacrifice has been satisfactory, but was also necessary, that our Lord Jesus as the risen and glorified Son of God might exercise in due time "all power in heaven and in earth," and thus bring about the great Thousand-Year Judgment Day, or "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:21) But with this his hearers, who must have been amazed with the logic of his argument, and must have wondered how their various disciples would be influenced by the new teacher, and to what extent they would lose caste, as being less logical or less lofty in their sentiments, found occasion for an expression of dissatisfaction, and of thus logically casting aside the entire argument—dismissing it as unworthy of further consideration.

Their objection rested on the resurrection, which the Apostle made so prominent, so indispensable to the carrying out of the entire plan of God; indispensable, first, as to the Redeemer, that he must rise from the dead, ere he could be the agent of Jehovah in prosecuting the work of blessing the world; necessary to the world of mankind, that they might come forth from the tomb and be granted a knowledge and opportunity of restitution or resurrection to all that had been lost by Adam's disobedience. When the resurrection was mentioned the occasion for expressions of derision was furnished, as though they would say We knew that there could be no thorough-going philosophy superior to our own; we were on the look-out for the weak point in the argument of this speaker who sets himself up to be a teacher, and now we have found it;—the resurrection! Nonsense! Whoever saw or heard of a resurrection from the dead?

Others of his auditors were less violent in their expressions, but agreed that they had heard enough for the present—implying that the argument was not very satisfactory when it needed to be supported by a resurrection hypothesis, which, to them, seemed very much less reasonable than their own philosophies, —that a man never died, and that when he appears to die he really becomes more alive than he ever was before. From their standpoint of view there could be no resurrection of the dead, since there were none dead,—all being more abundantly alive from the moment of apparent death. This has been the point of contest between the Scriptures and those who hold to them as the Word of God, and all other theories advanced by and backed by the adversary and in accordance with his original deceptive statement, "Ye shall not surely die." Those who would be on the Lord's side must accept the Lord's statement, "Ye shall surely die:" must admit that is is true; must admit that it was necessary that Christ should die, as our representative and substitute, to free us from the condemnation of death, and must admit also that only by a resurrection of the dead can we come back again to life,—to absolute perfection and full harmony with God.

However, one member of the Council of Mars' Hill (the Areopagite Society) had been deeply interested in the truth he had heard; also a woman of some distinction, and others with them;—for although the Society alone occupied the place of prominence in such discussions, the people in general were privileged to surround the court. The Apostle's experience here, as elsewhere, like our own, demonstrates the fact that at the present time not many have ears to hear the Word of the Lord, not many are seriously "feeling after him if haply they might find him." The majority are blinded by the god of this world, Satan, through various traditions, heathen and Christian, so that they cannot discern the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the true Gospel. At the present time it is not given to all to see and to understand (Matt. 13:11; Mark 4:11), but we thank God that the time is coming when all the blind eyes shall be opened, and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped; and then the preaching of "Jesus and the resurrection" will mean a great blessing, and all shall come to the knowledge of the truth, from the least to the greatest, as the Lord, through the Prophet, has declared.—Jer. 31:33, 34.

OUR EARNEST DESIRE

All who love the Lord love all who are sincerely his brethren—"begotten again" (John 1:13). And all who love the brethren have a burning desire to do them good—to assist them into the light and joy and peace of present truth. Our readers very generally agree that the MILLENNIAL DAWN is the best of all helps, and next to it ZION'S WATCH TOWER. We use tracts, etc., merely with those whose desire for the truth is doubtful—to stimulate an appetite for more, and that we may learn who they are These tracts we can supply you in any quantity free. But we are specially anxious that all of the Lord's followers should read the DAWNS and TOWERS. We, therefore, make the following offer, good throughout 1903:—

Anyone on the WATCH TOWER lists may send us the addresses of friends who promise to read the DAWN if loaned them free of charge, and who promise to return it (postpaid) at some time during the year—or to pay for it, or to send us a letter stating that they have read it with interest and profit and desire to retain it for future reading and reference, but are too poor to pay for it. In the latter case we will write them, making the book a gift, instead of a loan. We have long pursued this plan, except that heretofore we have required that the request come direct to us—whereas now we propose accepting the request through our readers. Furthermore, anyone already on our lists may send us in the names of any of their friends who will express to them a desire to receive the WATCH TOWER *for three months*, but do not feel that they can afford to pay for it. Such of these as you can assure us are true Christians and have already manifested interest in present truth, we will enter for the balance of the year, at your request, free. This differs from our ordinary offer, in that heretofore we have required that all entered either free or on credit shall write their requests directly to us: we find that some have been denying themselves the visits of the TOWER because of backwardness in asking. Such should be assured that we have a Lord's poor fund which pays for these papers, and that it will afford us pleasure to send it to them; that, indeed, it grieves us to learn of any interested in "this way" (Acts 9:2), being *for any reason* deprived of the regular visits of the TOWER.

With these liberal terms at your disposal we surely ought to have a list of 30,000 by this time next year. Remember, however, that you must write us that these friends *requested* that their names be thus entered—otherwise we could not list them. We must live up to the letter and spirit of the postal rules.

Our provision of last year holds good for 1903, viz., that any one now on the TOWER list may send us *four six months trial subscriptions* for one dollar.

We still advise that subscribers take advantage of our special offer of cloth-bound DAWNS, postpaid by us at 25 cents each. No other books in the world are sold at such a price: —any volume, any language. This special concession is to offset the fact that adverse postal rulings no longer permit us to send the paper bound editions singly at less than 20 cents per volume, even wholesale.

SONG OF CYRUS' MEN

When the great finger writes across the wall:
"Thou in the balance weighed and wanting art;"
Let me not then be in the feasting hall,
But from th' accursed city far apart.

Yes, rather with that vig'lant band of men,
Nurtured in trial, persecution, doubt,
To smite th' ill-fated ramparts when the sands
Within the measuring glass have all run out.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

We learn with regret that our reports of the progress of Socialism at home and abroad have been misunderstood by some to signify expectation that Socialism may be the Lord's way of bringing in the blessings of the Millennial kingdom. Our position seems difficult for some to understand. We believe that many of the ideals of Socialism are good;—more than this, that many of those ideals will be realized in the kingdom as they are now realized in heaven. But, we dispute the ability of Socialists to put those ideals into effect and make them continuously operative.

Why so? Because of sin;—because selfishness, the reverse of love, is born with all men;—and because nothing but a thorough conversion (such as few experience) and subsequent instruction in the school of Christ (such as few now enjoy) could possibly so correct the natural heart as to make love—the golden rule—its law.

No doubt many Socialists believe that their desires for Socialism are actuated by love, and not by selfishness; but such should not forget the Scriptural declaration that "the heart is deceitful above all things." Those clamoring for Socialism are generally such as believe that their temporal interests would be improved, or, at least, not injured, by Socialism. Remarkably few are advocating Socialism or anything else to their own disadvantage. We are not finding fault with this *natural* conditions; only God's saints love to the extent of self-sacrifice for the good of others. We are merely pointing to this evidence that the advocates of Socialism cannot claim to be actuated by love, but by selfishness;—we are merely proving our position, that even if Socialism were established it could not last, because selfishness would continually prompt each to work either for his own advantage, or else to work as little as possible.

Possibly a very few may be found working for Socialism and against their own interest: it is not for us to decide; but it is possible that ambition or combativeness have as much, or more, to do with their sacrifices than has love of mankind. The point we make is that Socialism is not practicable under selfish conditions; and that the *voluntary* Socialism which the Lord will introduce will not be attained until the close of the Millenneum, when the selfishness of the fallen condition will have given place to perfect love and the full image of God;—all the incorrigibly selfish being destroyed in the second death. The Socialism of the Millennium will not be *voluntary*, but enforced by the rule of the "rod of iron"—Rev. 2:27.

Our reason for keeping track of the progress of Socialism now is, that we expect that it, or something akin to it, is about to deceive the world into looking for a Millennium of its own, and lead them unconsciously to, and then over the brink into the anarchy and "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." We cannot wonder that this "will o' the wisp" should attract and ensnare many of "the groaning creation" who long for better things for themselves and neighbors; and we should and do sympathize with such very keenly; but for any one who has had his eyes opened to the divine plan for the blessing of the world, through Christ and his church, in the Millennial kingdom (invisible to the world), to be attracted to Socialism would be a distinct evidence of his going into the "outer darkness" of the world—away from the inner light of divine revelation given to the church.

CONDITIONS IN GERMANY

The London *Spectator* editorially reviews the German situation, and the evidences seen there of a political or a social revolution—all, be it marked, based on selfishness. It says:—

"Professor Mommsen, whose opinion has great weight in Germany, has issued a remarkable manifesto. He says that 'the overthrow of the Imperial Constitution is rapidly progressing.' The Reichstag and the Emperor alike are being subjected to the absolutism of an alliance between the Tory landlords and the priests. That is revolution and worse than personal government, because the autocrat would be impartial. All parties, in fact, are becoming revolutionary. The Liberals would like to convert the supreme head of the state into a 'first official,' after the English pattern, and 'that is revolution.' So is the desire of the Centre to reconvert Germany to Catholicism. So is the desire of the German squirearchy to restore aristocratic rule, and degrade the Emperor to be only first among his peers. And finally, so is the desire of the Social Democrats that every workman, without regard to his work, should receive out of a general pot the same quality of soup as his neighbors. The only remedy is for Liberals and Social Democrats to unite in resistance; but that requires a modification in the ideas of each, which the Social Democrats in particular, who seem bent on 'political suicide,' will be slow to concede. We are not so hopeless as the Professor; but certainly the trend of events in Germany is towards Cæsarism in the hands of a Cæsar whose considerable powers of mind are rendered partially useless by perpetual hurry."

ABOUT OUR PROSPERITY

The Pittsburg *Gazette* editorially says:—

"While the United States is enjoying unexampled prosperity, England is feeling the pinch of hard times. Accounts agree that in the poorer parts of London and in some of the industrial centers in the provinces there is an exceptional amount of distress. It is admitted that the year now closing has been marked by a decline of industrial prosperity and that there is an unusually large per centage of unemployed workmen, for whose relief during the winter special exertions will have to be made. Similar news comes from Russia. Famine prevails in the province of Finland, and in all industrial centers there is great suffering owing to lack of work. It is reported that workmen in important towns are glad to get work for 35 copecks a day, equal to 23 cents. The depression in England is largely a reaction from artificial stimulus of war expenditure, and in Russian it is a recoil from over production and over trading in connection with the rapid expansion of the empire. Germany is beginning to emerge from the depression that overtook her industries some years ago, but the recent tariff legislation, hostile to the commercial treaties which stimulated her industrial progress, has clouded the prospect again. The industrial prosperity of the United States is the admiration and envy of the world."

* * *

We receive many queries respecting the probable duration of present prosperity. That question no human being can answer satisfactorily. The world's wars being over and the great war expenditures stopped, would naturally mean that prosperity has already crested and is on the decline. But who knows what may come of the Venezuelan trouble or similar difficulties with other states, through the new program of the great powers that the claims of private bondholders against the smaller nations may be collected by force? Who knows that this program and the "Monroe Doctrine" may not clash so as to bring about one of the greatest sea wars of modern times? Or something else, of which we as yet have not a surmise, may come forward suddenly to give business a fresh spurt.

So far as the Scriptures guide us, we expect the climax of the great time of anarchous trouble in October, 1914. Our opinion is that so great a trouble would necessarily last in violent form at least three or four years before reaching that climax. Hence, we expect strenuous times by or before October, 1910. And this agrees well with the corresponding and typical trouble with which the Jewish age ended.

Reasoning backward from 1910 A. D. we are bound to assume that the conditions leading up to such violence as we then expect would include great financial depression, which probably would last some years before reaching so disheartening a stage. We could not, therefore, expect that depression to begin later than, say, 1908. Our reasoning is that a depression beginning *now* would culminate too quickly for the dates we consider fixed by Scripture, and that there is not sufficient time for a depression and then another boom and another depression before 1910,—notwithstanding the rapid changes of our day. These reasons incline us to expect a prolongation of present prosperity for a couple of years more. It is because we see no other cause than war likely to sustain present prosperity, that we are on the lookout for one;—and not that we favor or sympathize with wars.

CATHOLICISM IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

Recent reports indicate that the movement among the Filipinos to throw off the yoke of the Roman Catholic church is progressing rapidly. They have established the "National Filipino Church" modeled after the pattern of the Church of England. They have chosen as its archbishop "Father Aglipay," an excommunicated Catholic priest, and the movement is taking well with the people who for so many years have been under the oppression of the monks and friars, both socially and financially. The latter have gotten into their control vast estates and many of the most profitable plantations, as well as all the church property, schools, etc., with money wrested from the people for performing funeral and wedding and christening services, and for masses and penances, under the pretext of saving them from untellable torture in the future.

The people have seized many of the church buildings, claiming (we think, properly) that they were built with their and their fathers' money and labor and belong properly to them; and they are holding these by armed force and using them for worship according to their lights. Both parties—the people and the friars—are appealing to the American Governor Taft to decide for them. Neither party seems able to understand how church and state are distinctly separate with us. The Gov-

ernor advises both parties that he can and will do no deciding of the question—that the courts of justice must settle the dispute. Bloodshed is feared.

DISESTABLISHMENT MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND

The "Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage" is making itself heard. Its Secretary recently said:—

"The education bill and the rapid drift of the Anglican church Romeward are the pivotal points of the campaign. We contend that the bill is the creation of the state-maintained clergy and that it mulcts the people for the benefit of a limited class. We also contend that such an act would be impossible were the religious system independent of the state. The bishop of London's vehement protest against Romanist ritualism in several Anglican churches comes opportunely to aid our agitation. We hold that such evils are inherent in an official church which relieves the clergy of responsibility to the people and insures them life tenure. Unless guilty of gross breaches of immorality, Anglican ministers can teach anything, from agnosticism to transubstantiation, and remain perfectly secure in their clerical strongholds. The majority of them are deeply Romanists, but the English masses are thoroughly Protestant. When the people and not the state have control of the clergy the Romeward tendency will cease.

STATESMEN'S VIEWS ON ZIONISM

Lord Salisbury: "Zionism is destined to succeed in spite of the opposition it encounters. The Jews are capable of establishing a model government at Palestine, and raising the commerce of Asia Minor to an unprecedented height. If but forty per cent of the Jews were converted to the project, it would become an assured reality. There is no reason why the Sultan should object to the establishment of an autonomous Jewish government within his dominions. There is enough energy and perseverance in the race that has resisted oppression for 2,500 years to accomplish the purposes pursued by Zionism."

Ex-Premier Bourgeois: "The Jewish nation is too individual, too dissimilar, to other nations, to lose itself in assimilation. Zionism is essentially war upon Antisemitism—a phenomenon even more injurious to the dominant nations than to the Jews themselves, for it has a demoralizing effect, fostering hatred and checking the growth of the liberal spirit. The Jews are now reasserting themselves as a new-born nation and vigorously proclaiming their status as one. We may expect much from them, as they possess much intellectual power, Zionism is to be hailed as the solvent of Antisemitism, which will lose its *raison d'etre* with the unification and rehabilitation of the scattered and oppressed race."

THE TRUE FOLD NOT A PEN

JOHN 10:1.

Many of the Lord's sheep are penned in behind various creeds of men and thus hindered from obtaining the food and exercising the liberty which Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, intended they should have. It is contrary to the will of the great Chief Shepherd that his sheep should be separated from *each other* by pens, and hindered from the proper liberties of the fold. There is one general enclosure behind which all the *true sheep* of this age and flock will be found; and to it the Lord informs us there is but the one *door*—himself.

We might assume that all know something about this *one fold* and its *one door;* but this would be a mistake; many are so confused by the numerous man-made folds of Christendom that they confound these with the true. Some "wolves" are disappointed to find that the good Shepherd who gave his life for the "sheep" has provided certain limitations beyond which the sheep cannot go if they obey his voice (his Word), and beyond which they do not desire to go if they are actually his sheep.

Let those who like call this true fold, with its well-defined walls, "a man-made pen";—those who enjoy its security, enjoy also its liberty. It has one and only one wall, great and high, which so far has kept out the "wolves," except such as pretend to be sheep—who come arrayed in sheep's clothing. This wall is *faith in Christ* as man's *ransom-sacrifice*—finished at Calvary.

None whom that fence excludes are "sheep." And behind that simple, yet strong, creed-fence there is all the liberty proper for the Lord's "sheep;"—though probably not nearly enough for the "goats."

Further, while it is wrong for under-shepherds or anyone else to erect denominational fences inside this true fold, or to entice the "sheep" into them, and thus to restrain their liberties within the fold,—it is not only proper, but a part of the true under-shepherd's duty to protect the flock within the true enclosure of the true fold, from the "wolves in sheep's clothing" wherever found. No doubt it was as a type of the true Shepherd of the Lord's flock, that David [*i. e.*, the Beloved], while defending his flocks, slew a lion, and a bear, and delivered the sheep of his charge.

Our Lord, the great Chief Shepherd, set an example to the under-shepherds; and all true ones of his appointment must needs have the same spirit or soon lose their office. It was he who forewarned the true sheep, saying, "Beware of false prophets [teachers], which come to you in sheep's clothing [professing to be of the Lord's flock, but in reality not such, because they do not trust in the great sacrifice offered for all for their sins] but inwardly they are ravening wolves [who would destroy your faith in the *ransom*, and thus destroy you as "sheep"]. But he that is a hireling and not the shepherd, . . . seeth the wolf [the false teacher] coming and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf [the false teacher] catcheth them and scattereth the sheep. . . . I lay down my life for the sheep."—Matt. 7:15; John 10:12-15.

It is not the approval of the "wolves," in sheep's clothing or without it, that is to be courted by the under-shepherd. He will, however, have the approval of the Chief Shepherd, and of all the developed sheep who have their senses exercised by reason of use. The Apostle Paul battled hard against such false teachers, who affected to be believers, "sheep," while they were not such. Speaking on this subject he said to the Elders (under-shepherds) of the church at Ephesus:—

"I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all. . . . . Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock, over which the holy spirit hath made you overseers [shepherds] to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood [—faith in which purchase constitutes them 'sheep']. For I know this, that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you [in sheep's clothing, of course, otherwise they would not be received], not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking contrary things [things different from what I, Paul, have taught] *to draw away disciples* [followers] *after themselves. Therefore* watch, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."—Acts 20: 26-31.

The Apostle Peter, too, made a similar appeal to the under-shepherds, saying, "The elders which are among you I exhort. . . Feed the flock of God, as much as in you is, taking oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a willing mind." "But as there were false prophets [in the past—'wolves in sheep's clothing'] even so there shall be false teachers among you, who *privily* [deceptively, covering the real purport of their teachings] shall bring in [to the fold] damnable heresies [errors leading to condemnation and rejection] even denying the Lord that *bought* them. . . . . And *many shall follow* their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of the truth shall be evil spoken of."—1 Pet. 5: 1-4; 2 Pet. 2:1, 2.

The Apostle John also cautions us, saying: "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. . . . . He that *abideth* in the doctrine of Christ [that the Son of Man came to give himself a *ransom* for all—Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6] he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you [as a would-be teacher of the 'sheep'] and bring not this doctrine [of the *ransom*, taught by Christ], receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed; for he that biddeth him God-speed [or who even indirectly helps to spread the 'damnable heresy' that we were not *bought* by the Lord] is partaker of the evil work [of him who publicly and openly does so]."—2 John 8-11.

Thus we see that the duty of under-shepherds to protect the flock from deceptive wolves, as well as to feed them meat in due season, has been recognized from the start;—because from the start there have been such wolves. And since the holy spirit gave special warnings that in the end of the age "evil men and leaders astray" would wax more and more bold, and that through their instrumentality Satan would propagate error, and affect to be a messenger of light, is it not due time for all the sheep to recognize these facts, and not to be deceived by "feigned words" and "fair speeches"? The true sheep must not judge of fellow sheep by the pelt; for a wolf can wear a sheep's pelt: they must learn to note the Shepherd's voice and manner—directly through his Word, and indirectly through those whom he shall use as his representatives to "*feed the flock* over which

the holy spirit of God hath made them overseers [shepherds]."

Not only did the Apostle Paul thus direct the under-shepherds, but he points out the advisability of this to the flock, since it is thus that the Chief Shepherd leads and feeds and keeps his flock.—Heb. 13:17; Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Cor. 12:27-31.

Let us stand fast, therefore, in *that* liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free;—allowing no one to pen us up by human creeds; neither allowing any to lead us out beyond the bounds fixed for us by the Chief Shepherd, into liberties, licenses and speculations that he never authorized. Let us abide in him, keeping ourselves in the love of God, as saith the Apostle.

PAUL AT CORINTH

ACTS 18:1-11.—FEB. 8.

"Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. 3:11.

Athens did not prove to be a very successful field for the Apostle Paul's labors. He quickly perceived that, although its citizens were chiefly engaged in hearing new things and in philosophizing on every subject, including religion, nevertheless, the tendency of science and philosophy, falsely so-called, so occupied their attention and so satisfied their minds that they were not as ready for the truth as some others less highly educated and less philosophical. The Apostle's experience in this respect coincides with that of all who, in sincerity, preach the Gospel of Christ stripped of all human invention and philosophy. His experience illustrates his declaration that God does not choose many great or wise or learned, according to the course or standard of this world, but chiefly the poor of this world socially, philosophically and financially, to be heirs of the kingdom; because this class is more inclined to receive the faith and to become rich therein.

Leaving Athens, the Apostle journeyed about forty miles to Corinth, a prominent city of Greece, though very different from Athens. It was a commercial city, noted for its manufactures, architecture, paintings, Corinthian brass, or bronze, etc. It was much less moral than Athens, much less refined. much less given to the study of religious themes, but, nevertheless, a better field for the Gospel. Where religious forms and ceremonies become popular they are apt to have correspondingly the less weight and force. Where sin, immorality and irreligion are popular, those minds which have a religious trend are apt to be freer, more open for the truth, because unsatisfied by formalism, and because they more keenly recognize righteousness by its sharp contrast with the sin abounding. Similarly today, the truth is likely to receive a cooler reception amongst those whose religious sensibilities are to some extent satisfied by forms and ceremonies: truth usually makes better progress today in places where to some extent irreligion seems to have the upper hand (as in Corinth), and where, therefore, virtue is at a higher premium. The heart most ready for the truth is the one which is not satiated and stupified with religious formalism; but which realizes to some extent the exceeding sinfulness of sin and longs for the righteousness which is of God. Hungering and thirsting after righteousness is induced by such conditions. Like the Apostle, we are to discern the most fruitful fields, and spend our energies upon them, leaving the other fields for a more convenient season, whether it shall come during the present age or during the Millennium. The Apostle apparently stayed but a few days at Athens, but abode a year and a half at Corinth—the irreligious city, where he found many honest-hearted people, to whom the Lord directed the Gospel through him.

The Emperor Claudius Cæsar was reigning at this time, and the historian says that he "drove the Jews from Rome, because they were incessantly raising tumults at the instigation of a certain Chrestus." This was about the year A. D. 52, about twenty years after Pentecost, and it is surmised by some that the historian wrote Chrestus instead of Christus, a less common name, and that his reference was to dissensions among the Jews respecting the principles of Christianity, which by this time had doubtless reached Rome. That Christianity was already established in Rome before Paul's going there seems to be implied by his expression, "I am ready to preach the Gospel to you who are at Rome also." (Rom. 1:8-15) The supposition is that Aquila, a Jew, with his wife, Priscilla, a Gentile, who were amongst those driven from Rome, had received the message of the Gospel, and that the Apostle going to Corinth found Aquila readily by reason of their being of the same craft or trade—tent makers.

It was customary at that time that the sons of all the upper class of people should learn a trade, however well educated otherwise. St. Paul's trade as a tent-maker stood him now in good place, enabling him to provide for his necessities, while preaching the Gospel of Christ. From his own explanation of the matter we learn that even after a considerable number of believers had been gathered at Corinth as a church, the Apostle maintained himself by his trade—not because it would have been a sin for him to have received money and support from the believers there, but because he hoped that the gospel would commend itself more to many if its chief expounder were seen to be laboring not for the meat that perisheth, nor for wealth, but preaching the Gospel without charge—laying down his life for the brethren. There is a lesson in this for all of the Lord's people who have talent as ministers of the Word. Our object, like that of the Apostle, should be seen to be that "we seek not *yours*, but *you*."—2 Cor. 12:14.

The Apostle evidently lost no time in showing his colors—engaging with as much wisdom as possible in the preaching of the Gospel to the Jews and Jewish proselytes from amongst the Greeks in their synagogue. He was not in this an intruder, for such was the custom of the synagogue;—that any person of ability had the privilege of giving an exposition of the teachings of the law and prophets. The Apostle was a man of some ability, and apparently in every city he at first was welcomed; the subsequent hatred of himself and his theme being the logical result of the wrong condition of heart on the part of those who heard—their unwillingness to receive the truth in the love of it—their preference for the traditions of the elders, with their more or less error, rejecting the light of the truth as it came to them. We find similar conditions today in Christendom, and are following the Scriptural precedent when we appreach as closely as we can to the synagogues of our time, and as nearly as possible do as the Apostle did—reasoning with and persuading the attendants at divine worship. Under the usages of our time it would be improper for us now to attempt such a discussion or reasoning inside church buildings. The nearest approach we have is through the printed page, on the pavement, near the churches,—but far enough away to avoid reasonable prejudice and opposition. Let it be noticed also that the proper method of presenting the truth today, as in the Apostle's time, is not by haranguing, but by reasonable presentation—appealing to the testimony of the Word of God in a logical and a reasonable manner. Let us rejoice that we find ourselves in such good accord with apostolic methods, and resolve that we will refrain from any other methods, however popular they may be with those who follow not with us.

How long the Apostle continued in this way is not distinctly declared, but in his first letter to that church, written some time after, he remarks, "I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling; and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the spirit, and with power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." The word "weakness" in this text my be properly understood to imply that the Apostle was physically weak, possibly for a time ailing to such an extent as to be unable to work at his trade, because, referring again to the matter (2 Cor. 11:9) he intimates that for a time he was in want. This noble soldier of the cross was evidently permitted of the Lord to have a little season of measureable discouragement, when the sunshine of divine favor was to some extent beclouded by temporal difficulties: probably his physical weakness to some extent produced melancholy—"trembling with fear." He had no thought of abandoning the warfare in which he had enlisted himself even unto death, but apparently his recent experiences at Thessalonica, at Berea and at Athens, were causing him to wonder whether or not he was too aggressive in the presentation of the Gospel—whether or not he was inclined needlessly to bring upon himself persecution, and was thus perhaps interfering with the Lord's work, rather than helping it forward, as he desired. Now he was, for the time, at least, disposed to be extremely careful how he presented the message—how that, as our Golden Text expresses it, there is no salvation, no harmony with God, no eternal life by the law, nor by any other means than through the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was about this time that the Lord comforted and encouraged the Apostle by the arrival of Silas and Timothy, whom he had left in Berea. They brought with them not only the comfort and encouragement of a good report of the work behind them, the fruitage of his labors, but additionally brought presents from the brethren, which supplied his necessities, and caused his heart to rejoice because of the evidence of their brotherly love, and that the Gospel had reached their hearts

and even down into their pocket-books. The presence of these two fellow-helpers, in whom he had so much confidence, was a refreshment of spirit to the Apostle. Their coming not only brought physical strength, but an energy of spirit—an increased earnestness and force to his preaching: he no longer felt so timid, trembling, fearful. This is still true amongst the Lord's people—the strongest of the brethren need the help, the encouragement, the assistance of others. The Lord has so arranged it that we may not feel ourselves entirely self-sufficient, and that even our proper leaning upon the Lord shall seem to require also the co-operation, encouragement, sympathy and love of the fellow-laborers in the vineyard.

Who that has borne any measure of labor and heat of the day in the Gospel service cannot sympathize with this thought? Here, then, is a way in which many of the Lord's dear people who have not themselves the largest amount of talent or opportunity for service may be co-laborers and assistants in the Gospel work. The Apostle mentions these helpers in the same breath with the more able servants of the truth, saying, "Ye endured a great fight of afflictions, partly whilst ye were made a gazing-stock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst ye became the companions of them that were so used."—Heb. 10:32, 33.

Encouraged, revived in spirit, the Apostle was bolder now to tell the Jews and Greek proselytes plainly that there is no salvation except through Christ. The effect of this plain declaration was that he was no longer made welcome in the synagogue, and the opposition becoming violent, he shook his raiment, as an indication that he had nothing further to present, and would discontinue the discussion, declaring that their responsibility rested with themselves; that he had done all in his power to preach the good tidings to them first, as was proper; but that now henceforth, according to the scriptural declaration, the message should be proclaimed outside the synagogue, to any who had ears to hear it and hearts to receive it. The new meeting was started close to the synagogue, to the intent that the message he had already delivered might be impressed more and more upon those who had heard it—that they should not forget his declaration that the promise made to the fathers was in process of fulfilment in Christ, and those who accept him.

One of the chief men of the synagogue, and various of the people at Corinth were favorably impressed by the Gospel message, and the church of Corinth thus took its start in the house of Justus. The believers testified their acceptance by baptism—the true baptism of consecration, we may be sure, first, but also the outward symbolic water baptism, which would be a testimony to others and which is referred to in this lesson.

The Apostle, still mediating the propriety of greater moderation in preaching Jesus and the resurrection, was by this time, perhaps, feeling fearful of further difficulties with the Jews, and the trouble they could stir up with the authorities. Doubtless he had in mind previous experiences, and was debating mentally whether or not he should leave before the persecutions set in,—whether or not it was the Lord's will that he should be so courageous in the presentations of the truth as to awaken further hostilities against himself and all the brethren. The Lord came to the assistance of his faithful servant, and instructed him in a dream that he should neither leave nor hold his peace—that there were many people there of right condition of heart to receive the truth.

It is an encouragement to us to note this, another evidence that the Lord himself has supervision of his own work, and guides those who are truly his servants,—who seek not their own will nor their own honor, but to glorify him in their bodies and spirits which are his. The necessity for such admonishing by dreams is less today than in the Apostle's day, because the Word of the Lord is now complete, and in the hands of his people in convenient form, that they can, through the experience and instruction of the apostles, know what to expect and how to do;—whereas the Apostle was treading a new path and needed to be guided therein. We of today may know assuredly that it is the Lord's will that we should exercise wisdom in the presentation of his Word, and that grace should be poured upon our lips, that they may minister blessing to the hearers; but that we shall not hold our peace nor flee to another city until persecution has come to such a pitch as to almost necessitate removal.

We should not dare to say that the Lord might not use a dream today to instruct and guide his people, as he did the Apostle, but we do say that there is less necessity for such special direction, since the general directions of his Word are now explicit and amplified. We do suggest, however, that as the Apostle says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits," so we may well say to ourselves, Believe not every dream, but test the dream—whether it be of God or not. A dream must never lead us in opposition to the written Word of God, but if it can be understood in harmony with the Word and its reasonable interpretation, we should rejoice in it and be thereby encouraged to follow the *Word*. If the dream agree not with this Word it is because there is no light in it. (Isa. 8:20) We are confident that many dreams are not of God, the majority probably being of indigestion, and some quite probably of the evil one. Hence, we have the more need of care that we follow not a dream, because it is a dream, but at very most permit it to direct us to the plain instruction of the Lord's Word.

The Lord's promise that no man should set on the Apostle to hurt was fulfilled; for, although a disturbance was created and he was taken before the magistracy, no violence was done him, and the case was dismissed by the Roman governor. As with the Apostle, so with us; in the Lord's wisdom varying experiences may be to our advantage. Sometimes it may be advantageous to us and the cause that we should seem to be defeated and forced to flight. We may rely, however, that the Lord understands the situation fully, and will not permit his work to be disconcerted and interrupted to its real disadvantage. Long ago some one said, "I am immortal until my work is finished;" and we may rely upon it that this is practically true of all engaged in the Lord's service—that "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." He will use and protect and guide them in their affairs, in ways that will be to his pleasement, and eventually to their highest welfare,—to the intent that all of his good purposes shall be accomplished.

Why, then, should we fear what man may do unto us, or be distressed in regard to the Lord's work, as though Satan, or any other evil power could prevail against it? Nevertheless, it is for us to show our devotion, not only by our zeal, but also by our prudence. While God knows what will prosper, he declares of us, "Thou knowest not which shall prosper, this or that"—therefore, we are to proceed in the Lord's work as though the entire responsibility rested upon us, but in our hearts are to recognize that the entire weight and responsibility rests with the Lord.

Our Golden Text gives us the central theme of the Apostle's preaching on every occasion. It would be a poor text for Higher Critics, for Evolutionists, for Theosophists, for Christian Scientists, and for most other of the new gospels so numerous in our day. Let hold fast to the same message which the Apostle preached, which recognizes no other foundation than Christ, and no other church and no other salvation than that built upon that foundation. Other structures, built upon other foundations, are anti-Christian, however smooth their philosophy, however arrayed in a garment of light to deceive, if possible, the very elect.

"KNOWLEDGE PUFFETH UP; BUT LOVE BUILDETH UP"

1 CORINTHIANS 8:1-33.—FEB. 15.

"Let us, therefore, follow after things which make for peace."—Rom. 14:19.

About three and a half years after the Apostle Paul left Corinth he wrote to the church there the first Epistle to the Corinthians, and our present lesson concerns one of its important topics. The question of religious liberty, and the propriety or impropriety of eating meat which had been offered to idols, might at first seem unnecessary to discuss; but, as the Apostle handles the subject in our lesson, he develops from it a valuable lesson along general principles, valuable to the church now, as well as then, in connection with various other matters.

Some of the Corinthian church had evidently made considerable progress in knowledge, and heartily appreciated the fact that since an idol is nothing, meat offered to the idol cannot in any sense of the word be injured. Nevertheless, in the conference of the apostles at Jerusalem it had been specially recommended to the church at Antioch and to all Christian converts from the Gentiles "that they should abstain from meats offered to idols." Some of the brethren at Corinth perceived that there could be no sin in the eating of such meat where their consciences were not violated, and concluded that the admonitions of the Apostles were not a law to the church, but a recommendation, and had proceeded to use their liberties—to eat meat offered to idols, thinking, perhaps, thus to show not only their Christian liberty, but also that they entirely disregarded an idol.

It will help us to sympathize with them to remember that they were in daily contact with heathen neighbors who would repeatedly invite them to feasts, entertainments, weddings, etc., at which they were sure to be served with food that had been offered to idols, and which was supposed to be the better therefor. To abstain, under such circumstances, would mean more or less of an insult to their friends, and the practical ostracism of themselves. Some of the brethren took the view that they could partake of such refreshments without the least injury to their consciences, and at the same time show their heathen neighbors that they were not narrow and bigoted, but broad-minded;—or perhaps explain the matter by saying, "Your God is nothing anyway, and could not injure the meat."

The Apostle intimates that the majority of the church had such knowledge as enabled them to discern that an image of wood or stone, being no god, could neither improve nor injure the food in any sense or degree; but that this knowledge did not necessarily mean a great growth in spirituality. A very small mite of soap will make a large air bubble; and so, a comparatively little knowledge might puff one up greatly, without any solidity of character. He points out the advantage, therefore, of measuring oneself by growth in love, rather than by growth merely in knowledge—though, of course, to be great in both knowledge and love would be the ideal condition. The same lesson the Apostle inculcates further on (1 Cor. 13:2) asserting "though I have all knowledge and have not love I am nothing." Knowledge without love would be an injury, and to consider it otherwise would imply that real knowledge has not yet been secured; but, says the Apostle, to the contrary of this, "If any man love God, the same is known to him,"—acquainted with him. We might have a great deal of knowledge, and yet not know God, and not be known or recognized by him; but no man can have a large development of true love in his character without personally knowing the Lord and obtaining the spirit of love through fellowship with him. Hence, the getting of love is sure to build us up substantially (avoiding the inflation of pride) in all the various graces of the spirit, including meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, knowledge, wisdom from above and the spirit of a sound mind.

Having laid down this premise, the Apostle proceeds to build his argument thereon, and to show that although it is true, as claimed, that the idol could do no injury to the food, nevertheless with Christians love must have the last word on the matter. Love, after securing knowledge and liberty, will look about to see what effect the use of liberty might have upon others; and would perceive that by reason of differing conditions of mental strength, perception, reasoning faculties, etc., all could not have exactly the same standpoint of knowledge and appreciation of principles. Love, therefore, would forbid the use of knowledge and liberty if it perceived that their exercise might work injury to another.

True, there is only one God, and idols, therefore, are nothing as gods; nevertheless, the appreciation of idols as gods had become so ingrained in the thought of many that it would be impossible for them fully to divest themselves of some respect for the idols—impossible for them to eat meat that had been offered to idols without the feeling that in some sense of the word they had done wrong—had been contaminated or injured by the unholy associations. This would be true also of food offered to the heavenly bodies worshiped as gods—the sun, moon and stars.

Knowledge is beneficial;—"To us there is but one God, the Father;" of, or from whom, as the first cause or Creator, all things came, including ourselves; and there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, by, or through whom all things, including ourselves, have been brought into existence. The knowledge which would enable us to discern this matter clearly would assuredly be of advantage. But some dear brethren did not possess ability to reason clearly from this premise, and they had a claim upon their stronger brethren under the law of love.

We must pause a moment in our consideration of vs. 6, not because the Apostle's language is in any measure obscure; but because the adversary seeks continually to wrest the Scriptures, and to misrepresent their plain teachings, and thus to mislead the Lord's flock. We refer to the false teaching abroad today, that this statement, "Of whom are all things," signifies that all the sin, all the wickedness, etc., of the world are from God; are his direct work, traceable to him as their author or fountain. Surely it is nothing short of blasphemy for anyone who has first tasted of the good Word of God, and has been made a partaker of the holy spirit, thus attribute to God the various evils which, throughout the Scriptures are uniformly condemned, and which God declares he will ultimately—"in due time"—destroy! The Scriptures are clear in their statement that "all his work is perfect;" that "God is not the author of confusion;" that "God tempteth no man," and is not in accord with any suggestion to the effect that evil may be done so that good results may follow. (Deut. 32:4; Rom. 3:8; 1 Cor. 14:33; Jas. 1:13; 1 Pet. 311) It is in full agreement with the declaration that "all his work is perfect," that having made Satan a perfect being, as also he made our race perfect, representatively in Adam, God has not hindered his free moral agents from taking a course of sin in violation of his commands. His wisdom and power are such that he will eventually bring a blessing out of these evils to those who are not in sympathy with them, but the evils themselves, yea, and "all the wicked, will he *destroy*."—Psa. 145:20.

The Apostle proceeds in his argument to show that it is not the food that we eat that makes us acceptable to God, neither our abstaining from any particular food. Our relationship to God is that of the new creation, a heart relationship; and the blessing which the Lord gives us is as newly begotten children,—not along the lines of the flesh, but along the lines of the spiritual and heart development, which shall ultimately be perfected in the resurrection.

True, "whom the Son makes free is free indeed," and we all should "seek to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ makes free;" but it is also true that we need to be on guard lest we use our liberty in such a manner as would stumble others more weak than ourselves,—not so able to use the liberty of Christ discriminatingly. The liberty wherewith Christ makes free may be viewed from two standpoints: If it gives us liberty to eat without restraint, in a manner that the Jews were not at liberty to eat, it gives us liberty also to abstain;—and whoever has the spirit of Christ and is seeking to follow in his steps has already covenanted to the Lord to use his liberty, not in the promotion of his fleshly desires, ambitions and appetites; but in self-sacrifice, following in the footsteps of the Master, seeking to lay down his life, even, on behalf of the brethren—for their assistance. How different are these two uses of liberty! Its selfish use would mean self-gratification, regardless of the interests of others; its loving use would prompt to self-sacrifice in the interest of others.

But why?—what principle is involved that would make it incumbent upon one whose conscience is clear to consider the conscience of another? Why not let the person of the weak conscience take care of his own conscience, and eat or abstain from eating as he felt disposed? The Apostle explains that this would be all right if it were possible; but that the person of weaker mind, feebler reasoning powers, is likely to be weaker in every respect and, hence, more susceptible to the leadings of others—into paths which his conscience could not approve, because of his weaker reasoning powers or inferior knowledge. One might, without violation of conscience, eat meat that had been offered to idols, or even sit at a feast in an idol temple, without injury to his conscience; but the other, *feeling* that such a course was wrong, might endeavor to follow the example of his stronger brother, and thus might violate his conscience, which would make it a sin to him. Every violation of conscience, whether the thing itself be right or wrong, is a step in the direction of wilful sin—it is a downward course, leading further and further away from the communion and fellowship with the Lord, and into grosser and grosser transgressions of conscience and, hence, possibly, leading to the second death. Thus the Apostle presents the matter: "For through thy knowledge he that is weak perisheth,— the brother for whose sake Christ died."

The question is not, Would it be a sin to eat the meat offered to idols? but, Would it be a sin against the spirit of love, the law of the new creation, to do *anything* which could reasonably prove a cause of stumbling, to our brother;—not only to the brethren in Christ, the church, but even to a fellow-creature according to the flesh?—for Christ died for the sins of the whole world. It is a very serious crime against the law of love and against the Lord's injunction, to cause one of his brethren to stumble (Rom. 14:13, 21; Matt. 18:6), but it would also be a crime in his sight for us to stumble others,—to hinder them from becoming brethren, and of the household of faith. Hence, it is clear that although knowledge might remove all prohibition of our consciences and all restraints of our liberty, yet love must first come in and approve the liberty before we can exercise it. Love places a firm command upon us, saying,—Thou shalt love the Lord with all thine heart, and thy neighbor as thyself. Love, therefore, and not knowledge, not liberty, must finally decide every question.

Let us take our stand with the Lord, and determine that so far from using our liberties in any manner that might do injury to others we will refuse so to use them; and will rather *sacrifice* them for the benefit of others;—even as our Master, as our Redeemer, gave all that he had. Let us adopt the words of the Apostle in the last verse of this lesson, and determine once for all that anything that would injure a brother we will not do—any liberty of ours, however reasnable in itselt, that

would work our brother's injury, that liberty we will not exercise; we will surrender it in his interest; we will sacrifice it; we will to that extent, on his behalf, lay down our life for him.

There is, perhaps, occasionally a danger of misapplication of this principle; as, for instance, the Doukhobors might say to us, We regard that it is wrong to eat any meat and wrong even to use the skins of animals for shoes, and you are to condescend to our weak consciences in this matter, and ought not to eat meat or wear shoes either. We answer that that is not a similar question to the one which the Apostle has explained in which we should surrender our liberties. On the contrary, the Word of the Lord and the customs of society are all opposed to these bewildered people, and to yield to their mental unbalance on this question would be to assist them in a wrong direction. Our abstaining from eating meat or from the wearing of shoes would in no sense of the word help them to better views; nor does our eating of meat or wearing of leather in any sense of the word *interfere with their consciences*. Other brethren have an antipathy to the use of instrumental music in the worship of God, as there used to be people who objected to having meeting places heated and provided with comfortable seats. These may sometimes abuse the Apostle's argument, claiming that their consciences are injured by the liberties of the brethren; and that such liberties should be abridged in their interest. Our answer to them must also be,—that they misapply the Apostle's argument: it is not his meaning that the Lord's people are to favor the mental crotchets of each other in such a manner as would be the general injury of the church. Superstitions are not to be encouraged in the church, nor its spiritual advantages and liberties sacrificed on account of them. Nevertheless, love must always have a voice in all of the affairs of the Lord's people; and even such as would mistakenly impose upon their brethren upon the score of weakness, should be treated with love, and their objections, etc., should be reasoned upon. They should see that they have full liberty to do any and everything that the Lord requires of them, abstaining from every appearance of evil, and that their brethren should be accorded the same privileges. If they cannot conscientiously sing with instrumental music or sing hymns, let them keep silence, or for the time do their singing at home. Praising God with instruments is a very different question from eating in an idol's temple.

A somewhat similar question to this one which the Apostle decided, may come before us today in respect to attendance at public worship in the nominal churches, Protestant and Catholic —including the propriety of partaking of the "sacrament" or the "Mass." On such a question each has personal liberty; each should be fully persuaded in his own mind, and follow the direction of his own conscience. In our judgment it would be a much more serious offense to partake of the Mass in Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic or High Episcopal church services, than to sit in an idol temple and partake of the foods offered to the idols; because the Mass is particularly an abomination before the Lord. (Heb. 7:25; 10:14) As respects participation in the Lord's Supper, as observed by the majority of Protestants: We could see no harm in this of itself;—those participating might intelligently reverence and worship God in such a manner, even though realizing the inappropriateness, according to the Scriptures, of such a celebration. We would, however, think that a regular participation in the services of Babylon and in her misinterpretation of the Lord's Supper would be reprehensible;—injurious to our spiritual progress, and dangerous also in the stumbling of some weaker in their discernments. Our advice, therefore, would be that on the one hand we do not feel such a restraint that we would fear to enter a nominal church building to hear a service there; and on the other hand that we do not seem to give our assent to their errors by regular attendance and participation—except at such meetings as would afford us full opportunity for the presentation of the truth.

Another illustration of this principle in our times, is found in the liquor question. There will be no dispute that it would be wrong for any man to get drunk—to lose his senses, and additionally to render himself liable to do injury to others, and surely to dishonor his Creator. The question of liberty comes in only respect to the use of liquors in such a manner as would work no dishonor to God and no injury either to ourselves or to our neighbors. All recognize the fact that intoxicating liquors are a dangerous temptation to the world in general, and our suggestion to the brethren who feel that they have full power of selfcontrol in the use of liquors, is that they apply the argument of the Apostle in this lesson, and determine whether they could not more honor the Lord and help those who are weaker than themselves by using their liberty in the direction of total abstinence,—sacrifice of rights,—rather than by using it in moderate drinking.

So far as we are able to discern, intoxication is one of the most terrible evils scourging our race at the present time. Many are so weak through the fall, by heredity, that they are totally unable to resist the control of intoxicants, if once they yield to them. Is it too much to ask of those who have consecrated their lives to the Lord, to righteousness and to the blessing of others, that they should deny themselves in this matter, and thus lay down some liberties and privileges in the interest of the brethren, and in the interest of the world in general?

Similar arguments might be urged respecting the use of tobacco, cards and the various implements which the Adversary uses in luring mankind into sin. The whole, be it noted, is the argument of love. In proportion as we grow in the graces of our Lord, in his spirit of love, we will be glad, not only to put away all filthiness of the flesh for our own sakes, and to be more like the Lord, but also, at the instance of love, we would desire to put away from us everything that might have an evil influence upon others, whatever we might consider our personal liberties to be in respect to them.

Our Golden Text is in place here—it appeals to all who have become new creatures in Christ. "Let us, therefore, follow after the things which make for peace"—for the blessing of others and for our own blessing and upbuilding as new creatures in Christ, members of his body.

"IN MY NAME"

[Reprint of poem in issue of June 1, 1894, which please see.]

LETTERS OF INTEREST

DEAR AND HONORED SERVANT OF CHRIST:—

You may recollect having received a letter from me about a year ago, when I was in India; also, how, after ordering a copy of the MILLENNIAL DAWN, I returned it, having given up as darkness what had seemed light to me.

Your kind letter of January 9th, 1902, expressing your sorrow that I had turned aside "to the husks, theories and creeds of men," caused conflicting thoughts to arise in my mind again. Former Scriptures that had taken hold of me, revealing the utter destruction of the wicked in the second death, came with power to my soul, and I found myself in doubt concerning the "orthodox" view. In this state of conflict I cried to the Lord for light. The following verse of Scripture caused me to know that God would in his own time show me clearly which was truth:—"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for *doctrine*." I decided when I had leisure I would study the Scriptures on this point of doctrine, using Dr. Young's Concordance only to help me find all verses treating on the subject. Just then I was busy preparing to return to Ireland for a rest. After searching and comparing Scripture with Scripture, I became fully convinced of the truth of the second death; and of the non-existence of the soul of either saint or sinner from death till the resurrection.

I confessed this to the elders of the assembly with which I was in fellowship, and to other friends and evangelists. They expressed their deep sorrow, and some denounced me as a heretic, saying they "believed all would accept this doctrine of the devil ere the Man of Sin would be revealed."

The elders (known as "Open Brethren") assembled to examine me, and decided that I should be excommunicated—delivered over to Satan! 1 Cor. 5:4, 5; 2 John 7-11, were the Scriptures read to exclude me from their fellowship. Some were in tears, but were obliged to submit to the authority of the brethren, which is equal to the authority of the church of Rome.

In the midst of these trials the Lord filled my heart with his own perfect peace, and saved me from having a bitter thought against those whom I knew were walking in darkness and therefore did not know what they were doing. Since being excluded, I have met a few Christians who are like-minded, so I am not so isolated here as I was in India. One of my sisters, a brother and a brother-in-law see the truth and are suffering for it. There are some who are seeking more light and in many ways the Lord is opening up doors of service.

The missionary friends had hoped that after a rest I would return to N—— next year. But as I have written to these, they

also will exclude me from their circle. Still, knowing that I am not the servant of man, I am confident that if the Lord wants me to go to India again, he can and will prepare the way for me.

I regret having returned the MILLENNIAL DAWN, and am now ordering a few books.

With grateful thanks, yours in the patience of Jesus Christ,
(MISS) M. A. MCBRIDE, *Ireland.*

DEAR BRO. RUSSELL:—

It has been a long time since I have written you, and so I thought to drop you a few lines, just to let you know that I am still in the "race," striving to reach the "mark." Glory to God!

Acting upon suggestions received from you previously, I have now for the second time refused to sign petitions for dram-shop license. I wish to state first, that I know you instructed me rightly and Scripturally, for which I thank you. Added to this, the churches here organized quite a temperance movement, with which I also would have no connection, but have endeavored to occupy neutral ground; and the same in regard to politics; seeing that I am an "alien," I would not vote. In consequence there is a disposition to persecute me—from all sides, seemingly; because formerly I was interested in church work, took part in politics and signed petitions for dram-shop license. But do not think, dear brother, that I am complaining. Nay, "I rejoice in the Lord alway!" Formerly I was a member of a fraternal organization, and because I refused to accept suggestions from any of the Masonic fraternity (which includes all men of any prominence in our town) to become a member, they likewise have transferred their patronage, generally, to a competitor.

I am realizing how, by taking part in a political campaign, or other movement, it would be possible that I might be found fighting against the Lord, "who maketh even the wrath of men to praise him." I am realizing more and more the import of our dear Savior's words, while praying to the Father, "They are in the world, but not of it." Ah, yes! This means much to any consecrated believer. While we are in the world, yet we should keep separate from the world—not have our robe "spotted" by contact. If we would not be worldly minded, it is necessary that we have great care how we act in regard to those things which at this present time engage the attention of the world generally,—reform movements, matters of finance, etc. For inasmuch as we give our time to such things(no, not *our* time, seeing that we have consecrated our all unto the Lord) in so much the world has a claim upon us, so that while we are in the world, we would also be of the world, seeing that that which interest the world would also interest us. "The natural (worldly minded) man perceiveth not the things that are spiritual," and consequently is not interested in them; how much more, then, we that do see should not mind the things natural or worldly. All such movements which are the absorbing topics of the day, merely engender "strife, malice, anger, hatred," etc., causing all who have connection therewith to foster and cultivate an evil disposition, wholly contrary to the law of love.

Praying the Lord's continued blessings upon you and all with you, Yours in the one blessed hope,
A. W. KRUEGER,—*Missouri.*

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—

The many spiritual blessings we have enjoyed throughout the year increases our gratitude to and love for ZION'S WATCH TOWER. We will not be able to comprehend, dear brother, how much we owe the Lord this side of the "golden city." Until that glorious day when we reach the glad home-land,—the fruition of all our hopes,—we take much pleasure in manifesting the appreciation of which we are *now* capable.

The Society's Annual Report filled my heart with thanksgiving. There was only one sad note for which I am grieved, and that was the reference to the fact that some of the letters received at the TOWER office were filled with acrimony. Truly, this must be very painful to you.

Looking back over the old year I can truthfully state it has been a blessed year for me. Enclosed find money order for $——; please credit $1.00 on TOWER subscription, and balance in Good Hopes for 1902. You will also find herewith my Good Hopes filled out for 1903.

Wishing you a very merry Christmas and a happy, profitable New Year, with much Christian love, I remain, yours in the service of our King, CARRIE CROWLEY,—*Missouri.*

The eight-year old daughter of a sister in the truth writes the following herself:—

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I had my choice to go to Eden Musee or have the 50 cents and I want to consecrate it to the Lord. Mamma has told me all about how many different ways I could give it to the Lord, and I would rather have a part in sending the truth to some one; so you will please put it in the Tract Fund. I will send it with mamma's.

I sent my love to you and hope I shall see you some day. God bless and keep you all.

Your loving friend, RUTH SNOW,—*New Jersey.*

From another of the little ones:—

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

As we children have sold our pony, enclosed please find eight dollars, which is my share, to be used in the spreading of the truth.

Your sister in Christ, HATTIE E. HUYCK,—*Iowa.*

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

ABOUT MISSIONS IN CHINA

Francis H. Nichols, an American traveler, writes in the *Atlantic Monthly:*

"Perhaps in the higher sense, that 'no power is lost that ever wrought for God,' it is not wholly correct to say that efforts to introduce Christianity into China have failed. But humanly speaking, in proportion to the amount of money, lives and effort expended, they have apparently not met with great success. The small number of converts after one century of Protestant and three centuries of Roman Catholic endeavor is the least part of the failure of missions in China. All over the empire today there prevails a spirit of hatred and antagonism to Christianity so intense and so peculiar that a certain brilliant missionary in describing it had to coin a new word. He has called the feeling of the provincial authorities of Shantung toward Christianity 'Christophobia.' Usually it is specially stipulated when foreign teachers are engaged for recently organized government schools that they shall make no reference even in the remotest way to the Bible or to anything connected with it. In the gradual subsiding of the Boxer storm the one kind of foreigners warned to keep away from a troubled district are always missionaries. Except in the few places where they are numerous enough to form a community by themselves, Christian converts are ostracized, boycotted, and sometimes persecuted."

ENGLAND'S POOR LESS PROSPEROUS

"It is estimated that 500,000 persons are idle in the United Kingdom, and the board of trade returns show the largest per centage for ten years past of unskilled persons out of work, while the proportion of skilled men without employment is constantly growing. The Woolwich arsenal authorities have discharged 2,000 mechanics since the winter set in and are preparing to let out 4,000 more.

"To the army of people out of work must be added 56,000 members of the army reserve who have been released from service with the colors. The worst distress naturally is visible in the east end, where thousands of unemployed persons daily congregate at the dockyard gates, literally fighting for a chance to do a day's work. Unskilled laborers are there in strong force, and the police find it necessary to escort the foremen who distribute the work tickets each morning.

"A number of newspapers have started subscription columns, and daily print harrowing stories of half-clad school children, many of whom are without food except scanty luncheons furnished by sympathetic teachers. A number of the London suburban councils are starting public works in order to employ a portion of the idle persons. The Canning Town suburb, where the distress is keenest, has appropriated $50,000 for relief work."

FINANCIAL PROSPERITY OF U. S. CHURCHES

The Boston *Transcript*, reviewing the progress of religious matters in the United States during 1902, gives the following summary—the many millions of which cast quite into the shade our report of last December. But the Lord knows how much prosperity the truth can bear advantageously and we bow to his wisdom. Ere long the change will come—truth will be prospered and error will be put to flight. The clipping reads:

"Church interests, maintenance and betterments, are now costing the people of the United States $260,000,000 a year. And this vast sum does not include $70,000,000 which is given in benevolence, outside of government charity, and in sums above $5,000 each gift. Of this benevolence $3 in every $4

comes from members of churches. It cost to maintain all Baptist churches in the United States last year $14,138,195, all Episcopal churches $15,184,926, and all Congregational churches $10,276,105. Figures for Reformed churches (Dutch) last year are $1,622,696, and for Presbyterian (North) $17,080,191. To maintain all Methodist churches, South and North, cost last year $24,552,800. These figures in every case include betterments. They also include contributions to missions, both home and foreign. Financial figures for Roman Catholic churches are unobtainable, in great part because Catholic officials do not themselves collect them."

HIGHER CRITICISM GAINING GROUND

The following dispatch shows the progress being made by skepticism—infidelity:

"London, Jan. 14.—The *Times'* Berlin correspondent says that Emperor William appears to be taking a keen interest in what is called the higher Biblical criticism. He recently expressed publicly views which formerly he was understood to regard unfavorably, and spoke of the necessity of further development in religion.

"The Kaiser is on terms of personal friendship with Prof. Harnack, the leading exponent of the higher criticism, but appears to be influenced even more by Prof. Delitzsch, whose lecture, 'Babel und Bibel,' he recently caused to be re-delivered to a select audience at Potsdam palace.

"On Monday night the Emperor and Empress and other exalted personages listened to a lecture wherein Prof. Delitzsch expounded views denying the divine origin of the Bible, and finding a Babylonic source for much of the Old Testament doctrine of theology."

NOTHING TOO GOOD FOR GOD'S SERVICE

"If there be any blemish therein, as if it be lame or blind, or have any ill-blemish, thou shalt not sacrifice it unto the Lord thy God."—Deut. 15:21.

Such an injunction to the house of servants under Moses is, perhaps, more necessary to the house of sons under Christ (Heb. 3:5, 6), than many are apt to suppose. Inborn selfishness generally suggests that it would be a pity to sacrifice the best things, which could be used to advantage in so many other ways. And it is because this is generally done unconsciously that we now discuss this subject, with a view of helping the true-hearted out of the difficulty. Truly our hearts are exceedingly deceitful and require constant watching as respects their real motives, which they sometimes hide even from the loyal-hearted sons of God.

How often we have seen Christian parents, lovers of the Lord and his cause, who at times would bemoan their own inability to be actively engaged in the Lord's service, and who loved and admired the sacrifices of brethren and sisters in the colporteur service, who, to their injury, held back their own sons and daughters. Their reasoning seems to be that the work of the evangelist, as a colporteur, is good enough for those who have no education, or for such as are untalented; but they would have their children aim *higher* in life;—they would accept the Lord's bounty and expend it upon their children to give them an education, and then point them to medicine or law or literature or school-teaching as honorable and remunerative fields for their talents and education.

What a great mistake! what a sad mistake! How ashamed they will feel, if they ever get into the kingdom, when looking back they will see how lightly they esteemed the wonderful privilege of being co-workers with God in this present time! How vastly different will be their views then, respecting the *importance* of medicine and law and schools and literature and marriage! How ashamed they will be that they ever thought that the lean and the lame and the ill-favored were good enough to sacrifice to the Lord!—that none should think of colporteuring but those who had no capacity for "worldly prosperity!"

On the contrary the consecrated parent should consecrate to the Lord not only his first-born, but all of his children; and from infancy should be instilling into their minds and hearts that the proper course for all of God's people is to devote themselves in largest possible measure to the divine service. They should be taught to regard all of life's affairs with a view to rendering their all to his service in any possible capacity; and to pray that the Lord would accept and use their time, talent, influence—all—in his service, the most honorable service imaginable, and ultimately to be the most highly rewarded. The Apostle's teaching respecting marriage (1 Cor. 7:27-40) should be brought to their attention with the thought of the Apostle that it is not a condemnation of marriage in others, but one of the incidental sacrifices of those anxious to be most fully used in the Lord's service.

Not only so, but the Christian parent who discerns present truth should encourage his child not to strive for the higher education, but to be content with a common school education; because (1) to qualify himself for a profession would be to put before himself a temptation in that direction which would last through life: (2) because the higher education of the present day in all colleges is so impregnated with the evolution theory and higher criticism that the strong probability is that, like others, he would fall into skepticism, which will kill his devotion to the Lord, and he could only be induced to serve the Lord, even outwardly, by an honorable position and a good salary—if, indeed, it left him anything but morality as a substitute for religion!

On the contrary, every man and woman favored by the Lord with some knowledge of present truth should at once appreciate the true situation;—that the most talented and best educated have nothing worthy a place on the Lord's altar.—nothing worthy of acceptance in the Lord's service; and, forthwith, each should proceed to devote to it, daily and hourly, the *best* that he has and the *most* that he can, as being the greatest privilege that could ever be offered to angels or men—to be colaborers with God. Some, thus rightly appreciating the matter, are glad to leave medicine and business and schools to engage in the much grander and more important service of the gospel, as colporteur-evangelists;—to carry the printed message, of glad tidings of great joy, to all who have hearing ears. They rightly feel that they have not too much education or talent for so honorable a service as ambassadors for the King of kings, but that if they had more and yet more, it would be to the interest of the work.

Would you have a young man or a young woman dash all the prospects and ambitions of the present life, and enter the colporteur work,—simply because they have accepted present truth and because you urge them to this service? No, indeed: we hope that none so minded will enter the work. The Lord seeketh not such for his service and representatives, and, hence, we do not seek them in his name. He seeks such as "count it all joy" to serve him and his at any sacrifice. Those entering the work against their will would, undoubtedly, do poor work and soon fall away from the truth.

But would you recommend a man of means,—a business man, for instance,—to dispose of his own business and go about colporteuring? living on the interest of his money, or, perhaps, on the principal? Why not? Should we not all have the Master's spirit, expressed by his words: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" The Lord's true saints have no business of their *own*, for they gave their all to the Lord at consecration. Their business they manage as trustees for the Lord—not to be turned over at their death, in prosperous condition, to their children or their friends, possibly to their injury. It is to be used by the trustee as wisely as he knows how before death: for then his trusteeship ends, and he must render his account. (Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 19:12-26) If he can provide for the comfortable necessities of the present life for those dependent upon him, why should he do more for them, or for any cause longer delay to "show forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light"—in the best manner open to him? Alas, how few of those who recognize their trusteeship are faithful to it and will be able to render their report with joy, and to hear the Lord say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

Before "the harvest is past and the summer is ended," let us get awake, dear brothers and sisters, to our privileges and opportunities and use them thankfully. But let us not be misunderstood as commending anything impracticable. Only exceptional ones can do more than provide for their own personal comforts—even at the very liberal terms granted to colporteurs; and "he that provideth not for his own household is worse than an unbeliever" is the Apostle's argument. Those hampered by family encumbrances must show their love and devotion by some other form of sacrifice.

Let us give a concluding word to some of the humble and small-talented ones who have engaged in this service. They may, perhaps, be inclined to feel that they are of the *blemished* class of ill-favored ones represented in our text as unacceptable. But not so, dear brethren: the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord cleanseth us from all sin—covers all our natural blem-

ishes and makes us worthy and acceptable in the Beloved. A cipher alone has no value, but it is a power indeed, when it follows 1; and so it is with us when we follow Christ—his merit gives us association and cooperation with him; gives us weight and influence and power for God and his cause. "Ye are complete in him;" "accepted in the Beloved."

THE APOSTLE PETER'S EXHORTATION

"Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy."—1 Pet. 1:13-16.

To appreciate the exhortations of the apostles, we need to become acquainted with their several characters; to note their circumstances; to mark their zeal and faithfulness; and to remember that every word of exhortation addressed to the church has the substantial backing of their worthy examples. They endured hardness as good soldiers, and suffered much for the privilege of declaring the truth. In their writings are blended a high degree of the power of logic, eloquence and pathos, combined with an inspiring enthusiasm which must awaken in every student of their teachings a measure, at least, of the same sacred flame.

Though written so long ago, the above words of exhortation lose none of their force to us. They were penned for the instruction of the whole church, down to the end of the age. The introductory, "Wherefore," refers us to the glorious hope of our high calling, and of the necessarily severe measures required to fit us for our exalted inheritance, as mentioned in the preceding verse. Peter would have us appreciate what it is to be called with such a high calling—to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith. (Verse 4) He would have us know that, if faithful, we are to be made even "partakers of the divine nature," and that we are to be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, of all things.—2 Pet. 1:4.

As the spirit of God draws our hearts into closer fellowship and sympathy with the divine mind, the value of these "exceeding great and precious promises" is more and more fully realized, until there glows in our hearts the same holy enthusiasm that so filled the hearts of the apostles. And only when our hearts are thus warmed and our minds thus awakened, are we prepared to understand the Apostle's "Wherefore," upon the inspiring comprehension of which depends our ability to heed the earnest exhortation which follows.

If our hearts are not duly inspired with this hope—if we have begun to esteem it lightly, or to forget it, or to think of it as an idle tale—to heed the counsel of Peter, here given, will be impossible. If, therefore, we realize that a spiritual lethargy has to any extent been creeping over us, imperceptibly benumbing our spiritual senses, so that the truth is losing its inspiring power upon us, our first duty is to betake ourselves to prayer and to communion with God and his Word, that its sanctifying power may be realized.

"*Wherefore*," then, you that discern the prize of your high calling, and who are endeavoring to press along the line toward the mark, "gird up the loins of your mind"—as in illustration: strengthen and fortify your purposes and efforts; renew your determination; redouble your diligence; cast aside the weights of unnecessary worldly cares; increase your zeal; and, as the Apostle Paul also urges, run with patience the race set before you. Run, not like one who is merely beating the air, but like one who has a purpose in view, and who, in desperate earnest, is *determined* to make his calling and election sure.—Heb. 12:1; 1 Cor. 9:26.

Having thus "girded up the loins of your mind" for a long, steady and determined effort, he further counsels,—"Be sober:" do not allow yourself to become excited and, under the spur of excitement, to exhaust all your spiritual vitality in a very short time, and then to suffer a relapse into coldness or discouragement; but thoughtfully to consider and prepare for a long and patient endurance of all the discipline and trial of faith and patience necessary to prove an overcomer and worthy of the blessed reward promised "to him that overcometh." The race before us is not one to be run by fits and starts, but by "*patient continuance* in well doing." Soberly, thoughtfully, we are to weigh and endeavor to realize the import of the exceeding great and precious promises and to gather from them their invigorating inspiration; earnestly we must apply our minds and hearts to the instruction of the inspired Word of God, availing ourselves also of such helps—of "pastors and teachers" and their literary productions—which prove harmonious with, and helpful to, the study of the Scriptures; diligently and patiently we must submit ourselves to all the transforming influence, of divine grace and truth; and then, loyally and faithfully, we must devote our consecrated talents, however few or many, to the great work of preaching this gospel of the kingdom to all who will hear.

Such a sober view of the situation fortifies the mind against discouragement, and enables us, as the Apostle suggests, to "hope to the end for the grace to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Such a sober view keeps Reason on the throne of our minds. And Reason says, The divine call to joint-heirship with Christ clearly implies eligibility to the exalted office; the divine promise clearly insures divine grace to enable us to fulfil the conditions; the divine provision for my justification, by faith in the precious blood of Christ, releases me from the condemnation to death; and the righteousness of Christ, imputed to me by faith, fully supplements all my weaknesses, so that before God I stand approved in him. Sober Reason also says, The directions given in the Scriptures to those who would run the race are clear and explicit, and make plain every step of the way to those who are truly and fully consecrated to the Lord. The examples of the Lord and the Apostles shine on the pathway with a moral luster and glory that cannot lead us astray. If we walk in their footprints we will assuredly reach the same goal.

Therefore in this sober view of our high calling and its privileges, and the abundant resources of divine grace, let us not be discouraged or overcome in any way, but let us hope to the end for the grace (favor) that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ—at his second advent. The church has enjoyed much of the divine favor all through the age of her probation and trial; but the grace to be revealed at the revelation of Jesus Christ—when he comes to reign in power and great glory—is her exaltation with him to sit with him in his throne. This glorious consummation, the church all through the age must steadily keep in view: but how glorious is the privilege of those of its members living in this end of the age, when already, even before our change into his glorious likeness—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye—we begin to enter the joys of our Lord.

Those who are still sober and faithful, and who have not cast away their confidence, have been led into the secret of the Master's presence; and they have been made to sit down to meat, and the Master himself has come forth and served them. Yes, our hearts have been made to burn within us while he has opened up the Scriptures and made us understand, from the testimony of the law and the prophets and the apostles, that the time is fulfilled—that the end of the age is now here, and that the Lord of the harvest is present to direct and supervise the great work of reaping the fruit of precious seed long ago sown in tears, and now to be gathered with joy and singing; while he has opened up to us the treasures of divine wisdom and grace displayed in the plan of the ages, which God purposed before the foundation of the world, which he has been gradually working out in the ages past, and which is now nearing its glorious consummation.

Oh, what feasting, what rejoicing there has been around the table of the Lord, as one after another the treasures of divine grace have been opened to us, revealing the glories of the new heavens and the new earth, and the blessedness of all the obedient subjects of him who sitteth on the throne to reign in righteousness; how all tears shall be wiped from off all faces, and how the reproach of God's people is to be taken away! Well indeed did Daniel prophesy, saying, "Oh, the blessedness of him that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred, thirty and five days!"—the days of the Lord's second presence, when all that is written to be accomplished by his glorious reign shall begin to come to pass.

Seeing, then, that such are our privileges and hopes, "what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and god-likeness?" (2 Pet. 3:11) Being purified by this hope, ought we not, as the Apostle exhorts, to fashion ourselves, not according to the former lusts (desires and ambitions, which we had) in our ignorance, but as he who has called us is holy, should not we also be holy in all manner of conversation—in all our words and ways? Since it is written, "Be ye holy; for I [the Lord] am holy" (1 Pet. 1:15, 16), should not we who are

called to be partakers of his own nature and glory be holy also?

Some Christians have the erroneous idea that God does all the fashioning, and that his children are to be merely passive in his hand; but Peter does not so express it. He exhorts us to fashion ourselves according to the divine instructions. There is a work to be done in us and about us, and those who are not up and doing, but who passively sit and wait for the Lord to work miracles in their behalf, are greatly deceived and are giving the enemy great advantage over them, which he will certainly use to bind them hand and foot and cast them into outer darkness, unless they bestir themselves to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, while God, cooperating with their earnest efforts, works in them, to will and to do his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:12 13) "Watch and pray," beloved, lest any of these snares of the enemy entrap you and beguile you of your reward.

"LOVE IS THE PRINCIPAL THING"

[See revision of this article published in issue of Nov. 15, 1911.]

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-13.—FEB. 22.

"Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

In the preceding chapter the Apostle has recounted the various "gifts" of the holy spirit conferred upon the early church for its establishment and development. He closes the chapter with the exhortation that while esteeming all of these gifts, each member of the church should covet earnestly the superior ones; and then he adds: "Yet show I unto you a more excellent way"—something still better than any of those gifts of the holy spirit. Our lesson pertains to this more excellent ambition which should actuate every child of God; viz., the acquisition and development of the spirit of love, the spirit of the Lord. In proportion as we have the mind of Christ, in proportion as the holy spirit dwells in us and abounds, in that same proportion our love abounds.

There are different kinds of love, however, and the Apostle is here not speaking of general love, but of one particular kind, which belongs to God, and to the New Creation begotten of him. There is an animal love, such as the brute creation exercises toward its young, a love which frequently leads to the sacrifices of life in its devotion. This same kind of love inheres in the natural man, even in his fallen condition. It is all more or less selfish love,—ready, perhaps, at times to rob others that it might lavish good things upon those it favors. This is not the love which the Apostle describes, nor is he addressing his language to the natural man. He addresses the new creation, informing them that the natural man will not be able to receive, to appreciate, to comply with, that which he presents. In order to a clear comprehension of this love, and a hearty acceptance of it as the rule of life, it is apparently necessary that we be "begotten" from above.

It seems impossible to describe love itself; the best we can do is to describe its conduct. Those who possess a love with such characteristics are able to appreciate it, but not able otherwise to explain it—it is of God, god-likeness in the heart, in the tongue, in the hands, in the thoughts—supervising all the human attributes and seeking fully to control them.

Before describing the operation of love the Apostle impresses upon us its importance, assuring us that if we possess the very choicest of the "gifts" already explained, and do not have therewith love, we will still lack the evidence of our being new creatures in Christ Jesus. We should be merely "sounding brass or cymbal"—making a noise, but having no acceptable feeling or virtue in ourselves in connection with our words. He assures us thus that ability to speak fluently on gospel themes, even, might not be a proof of our relationship to the Lord as new creatures. The Apostle's declaration is introduced with an "if," which might be challenged, to a certain extent, by the assertion that no one could speak forth with power, with force, the gospel of God's dear Son unless he possessed the spirit of love. Although we have all met public speakers who could deliver very beautiful essays, we have generally perceived a hollowness in their teaching unless they spoke from the heart, prompted by love of the truth,—not by love of applause, nor for love of money.

Amongst the gifts, prophecy or oratory was one which the Apostle commended. Knowledge of mysteries of God is also commended, and large faith is reckoned amongst the chief of the Christian requirements; yet the Apostle declares that if he possessed all of these in their fullest measure, and love were absent, he would be nothing,—a mere cipher—not a member of the New Creation at all, since love is the very spirit of the begetting to the new nature. What a wonderful test this is! let us each apply it to himself. Whether I am something or nothing in God's estimation is to be measured by *my love* for him, for his brethren, for his cause, for the world in general, and even for my enemies,—rather than by my knowledge or fame or oratory. Yet we are not to understand that one could have a knowledge of the deep mysteries of God without having been begotten by the holy spirit of love; for the deep things of God knoweth no man, but by the spirit of God; but one might lose the spirit before losing the knowledge it brought him. In the measurement of character, therefore, we are to put love first, and to consider it the chief test of our nearness and acceptance to the Lord.

The Apostle next takes another line of argument: his hearers already understood benevolence, alms-giving to the needy, to be commendable; and to impress upon them the importance of having love as the controlling principle of their hearts, the Apostle declares that if he should give all of his goods to feed the poor—keeping nothing back—and yet do this without proper love as the mainspring to the conduct, it would profit him nothing. He goes still further and declares, that even if he should become a martyr, and be burned at the stake, it would not bring him the blessed reward sought, unless that martyrdom were prompted, impulsed, by love.

But it may be inquired, How could anyone practise such self-denial, such sacrifice, such faith, etc., and yet be without love? It is not our thought that they could practise these and be devoid of love; that there must be some measure of love. We understand the Apostle to make this strong statement of the case in order to show us that our almsgiving, our sacrifices, our knowledge, our teaching, are acceptable to the Lord and appreciated by him, only to the extent that they have love behind them. If love enters slightly into them, then they are slightly appreciated; if love enters largely into them, then God appreciates them largely. If they are prompted wholly by love, then God accepts them fully. If love be only a part of the motive power behind our conduct as new creatures, it implies that other motives are active in us, tending to neutralize in the Lord's esteem even services and sacrifices performed in his name and upon worthy objects. Let us be on guard against these neutralizing influences, and earnestly seek to be wholehearted, full of love;—that our every service of the Lord and of the brethren and of the truth be from a pure heart, free from personal ambition, pride, etc.

Having given us such a conception of the importance of love, the Apostle proceeds to describe what it is and what it is not—how it operates, and how it does not operate or conduct itself. Let us each make a practical application of this matter to himself, and inquire within: Have I such love, especially for the household of faith, as leads me to suffer considerable and for a long time, and yet to be kind? How quickly do I get offended? If very quickly it surely indicates that I have very little of the spirit of the Lord,—love. If I am disposed to resent the trifling wrongs of life,—if I have the spirit of resentment, am disposed to render evil for evil, and railing for railing,—it marks my deficiency in this greatest of all the graces, so essential to my ultimate passing, as an overcomer, the divine inspection.

Of our heavenly Father it is said that "he is kind to the unthankful." Have I this spirit of kindness—his spirit? Am I kind to my friends? gentle? courteous? Have I this mark of love pervading my actions and words and thoughts—that I think of and am considerate of others? that I feel and manifest kindness toward them in word, in look, in act? A Christian, above all others, should be kind, courteous, gentle, in his home, in his place of business, in the church—everywhere. With the child of God this patience and kindness are not merely put on, as grapes might be tied to a thorn-bush, but, on the contrary, they are the *fruits* of the spirit—growths from or results of having come into fellowship with God, learned of him, received of his spirit of holiness, spirit of love.

Have I the love that envieth not, so that I can see others prosper and rejoice in their prosperity, even if for the time my own affairs be not so prosperous? This is generosity, the very opposite of jealousy and envy. The root of envy is selfishness: envy will not grow upon the root of love. Love envies not, but rejoices in the prosperity of all that is good.

Have I the love that vaunteth not itself?—the love that tends to humility, that is not boastful, nor puffed up? Some one has truly said, that "*love* saves a man from making a fool

of himself by consequential conduct, and by thrusting himself into positions which betray his incompetence." Boastful—over self-esteem—has led many a man not only into folly, but sometimes into gross sins, in his endeavor to make good his boasts. The spirit of the Lord is a spirit of a sound mind, which not only seeks generously to esteem others, but also soberly to estimate oneself, and not to be puffed up.

Have I the love which does not behave itself unseemly—discourteously, impolitely? Politeness has been defined as love in trifles. Courtesy is said to be love in little things. The secret of politeness is either a surface polishing or love in the heart. As Christians we are to have the heart-love, which will prompt us to acts of kindness and courtesy, not only in the household of faith, but in our homes and in our dealings with the world.

Have I the love that seeketh not her own merely?—that might even be willing to let some of her own rights be sacrificed in the interests of others?—or have I the selfishness which not only demands my own rights on every occasion, but which demands those rights regardless of the convenience, comfort and rights of others? To have love in this particular, means that we will be on guard against taking any unjust advantage of others, and to prefer rather to suffer a wrong than to do a wrong,—to suffer an injustice than to do injustice.

Have I the love which is not easily provoked? Indeed, the original omits the word "easily," and gives rather the thought that love does not become irritated, roused to anger. Love enables its possessor to see both sides of a question; It makes of him a veritable philosopher; it gives him the spirit of a sound mind. He perceives that exasperation and violent anger are unbecoming and worse than that, injurious, not only toward those against whom they may be directed, but injurious in their effect also upon his own heart and body. There may be times when love will need to be firm, almost to sternness and inflexibility, where principles are involved, where valuable lessons are to be inculcated; and this might come under the head of anger, using that word in a proper sense in regard to a righteous indignation, exercised *for a loving purpose*, for doing good—but then only for a time. If justly angry we should see to it that we sin not, even with our lips or in our hearts, in which at no time may we entertain any but loving and generous sentiments toward those who are our enemies, or toward those of our friends whom we would assist or instruct or correct.

To be easily provoked is to have a bad temper, to get worked up into a passion, where evil looks and evil words and angry sentiments are involved. This is wholly contrary to the spirit of love, and whoever is on the Lord's side and seeking to be pleasing to him and to attain to an overcomer's position should jealously guard against this general besetment of our day. Those begotten of the holy spirit should all be good tempered. In no way can we better show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light than by the exhibition of the spirit of love in the daily affairs of life.

Have I the spirit of love which thinketh no evil?—which is guileless, not suspicious of evil or looking for faults in others, or attributing to them evil motives? It is an old adage that "faults are thick where love is thin."

The Revised Version presents a slightly different thought here—"Taketh not account of evil"—does not charge up the wrong against the evil-doer, as if waiting for an apology or a restitution or an opportunity to "get even." But while love passes over offenses and takes no account of them, holding no grudges, this would not mean that love would necessarily treat evil-doers in precisely the same manner that it would treat its friends. It might be proper or necessary, even, to take some notice of the offenses to the extent of not manifesting the same cordiality as before, but no hatred, malice or strife should be manifested—nothing but kindness and gentleness, leaving the door of opportunity open for a full reconciliation as soon as possible; doing all that could be done to promote a reconciliation and evincing a willingness to forgive and forget the wrongs.

Have I the love which rejoices not in iniquity (inequity) but rejoices in the truth? Are the principles of right and wrong so firmly fixed in my mind, and am I so thoroughly in accord with the right and so opposed to the wrong that I would not encourage the wrong, but must condemn it, even if it brought advantages to me? Am I so in accord with right, with truth, that I could not avoid rejoicing in the truth and in its prosperity, even to the upsetting of some of my preconceived opinions, or to the disadvantage of some of my earthly interests? The love of God which the Apostle is here describing as the spirit of the Lord's people, is a love which is far above all selfishness, and is based upon fixed principles which should, day by day, be more and more distinctly discerned, and always firmly adhered to at any cost.

Have I the love that beareth all things?—that is impregnable against the assaults of evil? that resists evil, impurity, sin and everything contrary to love? Have I the love that believeth all things? that is unwilling to impute evil to another unless forced so to do, by indisputable evidences?—that would rather believe good than evil about everybody?—that would take no pleasure in hearing evil, but would be disposed to resent it? Have I the love that hopeth all things, that perseveres under unfavorable conditions, and continues to hope for and to labor for those who need my assistance? Have I the love that endureth all things?—that is, that continues to hope for the best in regards to all and to strive for the best, and that with perseverance—not easily discouraged?

As disciples or pupils of Christ, we are in his school, and the great lesson which he is teaching us day by day, and the lesson which we must learn thoroughly if we would attain the mark of the prize of our high calling in all its various features and ramifications, is the lesson of Love. It takes hold upon and relates to all the words and thoughts and doings of our daily lives. As the poet has said,

"As every lovely hue is light,—so every grace is love."

Next the Apostle points out that as love is the most excellent thing, so is it the most enduring. The gift of prophecy would pass away; the value and necessity for speaking with other tongues would cease; and all knowledge of the present time, imperfect as it is, must surely cease to be valuable when the perfections of the new dispensation are fully ushered in. The very best informed now know only in part; but when perfection shall be attained in the kingdom, and under its ministration, all the partial and imperfect conditions of the present time will have been superseded, and only the one thing may surely be said to endure and be everlasting,—and that one thing is Love.

An illustration of the growth which we must expect as between the present knowledge and attainments and those of the future, is of the child and the growth to manhood. Another illustration is seeing obscurely in one of the old-time mirrors, which gave but imperfect reflections. With the perfections of the new condition we will see perfectly, know perfectly, understand perfectly. Just so the gifts which were in the early church were very suitable to it, as fitted to its infantile condition; but as it would develop to maturity the value of those "gifts" would diminish, and they would be no more; but higher developments of divine favor were to be expected, faith, hope and love. All three of these the church of God is to cultivate, and to esteem as *fruits* of the spirit, far above the *gifts* of the spirit,—and the greatest of these three is Love.

Love also is the most enduring; for will not faith practically come to an end when we shall see and know thoroughly? And will not hope practically be at an end when we shall reach the fruition of all our hopes and be possessors of the fulness of our heavenly Father's promises? Love, however, will never fail, even as it had no beginning. God is love, and since he was without beginning, so love was without beginning; because it is his character, his disposition; and as he endureth forever, so love will endure forever. Whoever, therefore, learns thoroughly the lessons of this present time in the school of Christ, and thus becomes well stocked with this wonderful grace of love, lays up treasures which may be his to all eternity—a great blessing to himself and to all with whom he comes in contact now; and a blessing to the world to which he will be permitted to minister during the Millennium;—a blessing everlasting, because it is a seal of divine approval.

A PILGRIM VISIT TO JAMAICA

Finding that the truth has been making good progress in Jamaica, so that at 14 places there are from 3 to 17 subscribers to ZION'S WATCH TOWER each, we are sending Brother J. A. Browne (colored), who is well educated and also well versed in the truth, to strengthen and encourage them. He will land at Port Antonio, and all the little groups desiring his assistance should address him there *at once*. Mark letters, "*General Delivery—Hold until called for.*" He will then arrange dates and send out notifications.

His expenses will all be defrayed by our Society—except that those who can do so may have the pleasure and privilege of entertaining him en route. No collections.

BAPTISM UNTO REPENTANCE NOT BAPTISM INTO CHRIST

ACTS 18:23-19:7.—MARCH 1.

"If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy spirit to them that ask him?"—Luke 11:13.

After leaving Corinth the Apostle completed his second missionary tour, and returned to Antioch, stopping en route at Jerusalem, where he greeted the church and, no doubt, gave them an account of the Lord's blessing upon his recent ministries in Europe. Aquila and Priscilla went with the Apostle as far as Ephesus, and the vessel on which he traveled remaining over the Sabbath at the port, he improved the opportunity to speak for Christ in the synagogue of Ephesus. His discourse was no doubt in the nature of a preparation for a future work which he hoped to do there. He doubtless spoke only along the lines of first principles—respecting the glorious prophecies of Messiah, and the fulfilment which should now be expected. His discourse was well received, and he was urged to remain longer, and gave his promise of a later return.

We are not informed how long the Apostle remained at Antioch, but "after he had spent some time there he departed and went over all the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, establishing all the disciples." While the Apostle was energetic in the establishment of new companies of the Lord's people, he was not slack in looking out for the spiritual welfare and growth of those which he had already established, as is evidenced by this statement—this being his third visit to these churches.

When the Apostle returned to Ephesus he found that in his absence a Christian brother named Apollos had come and had preached eloquently in the synagogue, using very close, logical and convincing arguments, and securing twelve converts to Christianity. He was a Jew, born at Alexandria, one of the chief cities of that time, specially noted for its schools of learning and extensive libraries. The common version says that Apollos was "eloquent"; the revised version, that he was "learned," and the Greek word seems to be with equal propriety translatable either way: in all probability he was both learned and eloquent. However, he was not as thoroughly advanced in the knowledge of the Lord and of the truth as were Aquila and Priscilla who had for a time companied with the Apostle; and as soon as they heard Apollos in the synagogue they recognized him as a Christian brother, and took him to their own home, where they had good opportunity for communicating to him "the way of the Lord more perfectly."

We have here a beautiful illustration of how the Lord is pleased to use his consecrated people. He had use for the talents and education of Apollos; he had use also for the less talented Aquila and Priscilla who, though not qualified to speak in public in the synagogue, were, nevertheless, used of the Lord to bless his more eloquent disciple, and thus to be sharers with him in the fruits of his more public ministry. The same is true today, as the Apostle explains. (1 Cor. 12:12-26) No member of the body of Christ can say that he has no need for another member, and no member may say that there is nothing whatever that he can do in the service of the body. Under the guidance of our glorious head each member who is filled with his spirit, and desirous of serving him, may do so. When the time for rewards will come, who knows how much of the usefulness of Paul and Apollos may be accredited to some of the humble ones such as Aquila and Priscilla, who in various ways ministered to and encouraged and supported their abler brethren in the Lord's work. The Apostle mentions very tenderly some of this class who colabored with him, supporting his work by their influence and by their means. (Phil. 4:3) Similar opportunities are still open, and no child of the Lord should be content to let the days of the present harvest time go by with their golden opportunities for service and cooperation without seeking each day to lift the royal banner himself, and to publicly show forth the praises of him who hath called him out of darkness into light, or by assisting and cooperating with others whom the Lord in his providence has placed in more advantageous positions for public service.

Apollos, hearing from Aquila and Priscilla of the glorious work accomplished by the Apostle Paul at Corinth, went thither, taking with him a letter of introduction from his newly found friends at Ephesus, who had so recently left Corinth. Incidently we are told that his going to Corinth proved a blessing to the church there, because of his thorough acquaintance with the Scriptures and his ability in expounding them, so that he could "forcefully confute the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ." That the Corinthian brethren were greatly pleased with the masterful ability of Apollos as a teacher of the truth is implied by the fact that some of them were disposed to say that they were followers of Apollos, while others, also sectarian in spirit, claimed to be followers of Paul, and others of Peter—all of which sectarianism the Apostle distinctly reproved subsequently in his epistle to them.—1 Cor. 3:3-7.

There is room for all the ability of all the brethren in the church, and such a thing as rivalry or partisanship is entirely out of place. We have one Lord, one Head: we all are brethren, and our highest aim should be to honor our Head and serve the fellow-members; and each one who so endeavors should be highly esteemed, whether his talents are greater or smaller than those of others. Another lesson here is the importance of being well versed in the Scriptures. The sword of the spirit is the Word of God, and he who would serve the cause best must know how to use this weapon which the Lord himself has provided—forcefully, convincingly and yet lovingly. The Scriptures with which Apollos was familiar were the Old Testament writings, since the New Testament was not yet compiled, though doubtless a few of its books had already been written. Whether Apollos had seen these or not, he had from some quarter "been instructed in the way of the Lord," before meeting Aquila and Priscilla, and was now, through them, still more thoroughly furnished for his ministry of the truth. Let us each resolve that by the Lord's grace we will put on the entire Christian armament, supplied us by the Lord, not neglecting the sword of the spirit—the Word. Let us learn, too, to be ready to accept further instructions as from the Lord, however humble may be the channels through which he may send it to us. Humility is one of the graces highly esteemed by the Lord, and one of the points upon which he frequently tests his followers: "Except ye become as little children [teachable, guileless], ye shall in nowise enter the kingdom of heaven."

It was while Apollos was at Corinth that the Apostle Paul came to Ephesus, according to promise, and began a ministry there which lasted two years (19:10). Aquila and Priscilla had seemingly left Ephesus by this time, as they are not again mentioned; but the Apostle speedily found those whom Apollos' ministry had reached, twelve in number. (Vs. 7) Our Common Version would seem to give the inference that the Apostle was surprised that these believers at Ephesus had not yet received gifts of the holy spirit. But not so; he merely wished to bring to their attention the fact that such gifts were possible to them, for only an apostle could convey the gifts of the holy spirit, as we have already seen. (Acts 8:14-17) The preaching of Apollos was merely along the lines of first principles of the doctrine of Christ, represented in the baptism of John to the Jews, while these believers were, evidently, by nature Gentiles.

Apollos had explained the Gospel merely to the extent of repentance from sin and faith in Christ as the Redeemer. He had no knowledge of the fuller meaning of baptism as explained by the Apostle (Rom. 6:3-5)—a baptism of consecration, to suffer with Christ—to be dead with him, to participate in his resurrection to the new nature and to be ultimate sharers with him in the heavenly kingdom. The Apostle explained to them this "mystery" of fellowship with the Messiah—participation in his sufferings, and by and by in his glory (Col. 1:26, 27): and when they heard this they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus—as members of his body, to fellowship in his sufferings, even unto death.

How many believers there are today who, like these described, are members of "the household of faith," but not members of "the body of Christ"—who have gone so far as a baptism of repentance and reformation, and faith in the Redeemer, but who have not been instructed respecting the great privileges which belong to this dispensation—that we may become "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together!" Wherever we go, let us each seek by the grace of God to explain the way of the Lord more perfectly to these already partially indoctrinated ones. So long as there are a plenty of such to labor with, it would be unwise, yea, contrary to our covenant and commission, to specially devote our lives and energies to the world; for although we are to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, it is to be chiefly to the household of faith. All around us, in the churches of the various denominations, are, we believe, hundreds, yea, thousands who are in the condition of these mentioned in the lesson, knowing only the *baptism of repentance*, knowing not the *baptism of Christ*—the baptism into his death, the baptism of full consecration. Let us be diligent in this highest department of the work of the ministry, feeding, instructing, the Lord's flock.

After instructing them thus respecting the true baptism, and after performing upon them its water symbol, the Apostle laid his hands on the believers and they received the holy spirit —that is to say, the "gifts of the spirit" were manifested in them—they spake with tongues, prophesied, etc., as described in 1 Corinthians 12. We have no power to communicate such gifts today, nor have others this power. It was an apostolic power, not transferable to others, as it was not the Lord's intention that those gifts should remain with the church, but merely should be a witness in its infancy period;—until the New Testament writings should be within reach, and until the fruits of the spirit could be developed.

However, let none envy the primitive church this special blessing, so necessary to its progress and joy; but remember that under the Lord's providence our conditions in some respects are still more favorable, in that we have the written Word for our admonition. Let us remember the testimony of the Apostle in our last lesson, too,—to the effect that faith, hope and love, *fruits* of the spirit, far excel the tongues and interpretations and miracles of the *gifts* of the spirit: so that as he explained, if one had all these gifts, and lacked the one fruit of love, he would be "nothing";—it would profit him nothing as respects a share in the body of Christ, and in the glorious blessings, present and future, which belong to it.

Our Golden Text evidently refers, not to the miraculous gifts of the spirit enjoyed by the primitive church, but to the holy spirit, or disposition, "the mind of Christ," the common privilege of all who are baptized into Christ's death, and who seek by faith to walk in newness of life. The miraculous gifts of the primitive church could come only through apostolic hands; but the spirit, in the sense that we still enjoy it, the mind of Christ, the mind of God, with all the fruits and graces thereof, is still the privilege of the Lord's people, and dependent not upon apostolic or other hands, but upon our heavenly Father and upon the zeal with which we seek by prayer and every endeavor to have his mind, his disposition, controlling our thoughts, our words, our conduct. It is God's good pleasure to give us this spirit of love; but he gives it only to those who desire and seek it with patient perseverance.

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."—John 8:31, 32.

Our Lord's preaching always produced two opposite effects upon the promiscuous multitudes that heard him. It attracted one class and repelled another. Those who were full of pride and conceit, and who preferred darkness to light because their deeds were evil, and because they realized that if they admitted the light of truth they must of necessity conform their characters to it,—all such were repelled by the teachings of Christ. And if the Lord had undertaken the work of the ministry according to the methods pursued today, depending for support on the good will and contributions of the people, that support would often have been very meager, or, at least, very fluctuating. On some occasions multitudes received his testimony, and later deserted him and walked no more with him, as he continued to enforce the lessons of divine truth. (Luke 4: 14, 15, 22, 28, 29) Sometimes the multitudes hung upon his words, wondering at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth; and again and again they forsook him, while only a mere handful remained. (John 6:60, 66-69) What consternation would follow in the various churches of today, if the professed ministers of the Gospel should follow the Master's example in similarly declaring the whole counsel of God. How quickly they would become unpopular, and be charged with breaking up the church. Why, the great congregations that now throng the temples of fashion dedicated to the service of God and the teachings of Christ would not stand it! They go there to be entertained with pleasing and eloquent discourses from titled gentlemen who, presumably, know their tastes and ideas, and who will preach to please them. They are quite willing to pay their money for what they want, but they do not want the truth.

Those who followed the Lord only for a little season and then forsook him, of course, ceased then to be his disciples and were no longer so recognized; nor did they presume longer to claim to be his disciples. A disciple is a pupil, a learner; and when any man ceases to be a student and pupil of Christ, the great Teacher, he is no longer a disciple of Christ. This was very manifest when the Lord was present, and when his name was one of reproach among men: but later, when his presence was withdrawn, and when his doctrines were unscrupulously fixed with human philosophies to such an extent as to divest them of their reproach, and to make them really void, then men began to claim to be his disciples—long after they had utterly repudiated his doctrines.

The Lord's expression—"disciples indeed"—implies a distinction between real and merely nominal disciples. And since we desire to continue to be his real, sincere disciples, let us mark the expressed condition: "If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed." The hypocrisy of merely nominal discipleship is an abomination to the Lord.

It is a blessed thing to take the first step in the Christian life—that of belief in and acceptance of Christ as our Redeemer and Lord; but the reward of this step depends entirely upon our *continuance* in his Word, in the attitude of true disciples. It is not difficult to do this, yet the disposition of human pride is to wander away from the simplicity of divine truth and to seek out new theories and philosophies of our own, or to pry into those of other men, who desire to be considered wise and great according to this world's estimate.

The reward of continued discipleship is, "Ye shall know the truth"—not that we shall be "ever seeking and never coming to a knowledge of the truth." (2 Tim. 3:7) Here is the mistake that many make: failing to continue in the Word of the Lord, they delve into various human philosophies which ignore or pervert the Word of the Lord and set up opposing theories. There is no promise, to those who seek for truth among these, that they shall ever find it. And they never do. Divine truth is never found except in the divinely appointed channels: and those channels are the Lord and the apostles and prophets. To continue in the doctrine set forth in their inspired writings, to study and meditate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and faithfully to conform our characters to them, is what is implied in continuing in the Word of the Lord.

But the idea is entirely compatible with that of heeding all the helps which the Lord from time to time raises up from among our brethren in the body of Christ, as enumerated by the Apostle Paul. (Eph. 4:11-15; 1 Cor. 12:13, 14) The Lord always has raised up, and will to the end raise up, such helps for the edification of the body of Christ; but it is the duty of every member to prove carefully their teaching by the infallible Word.

If we thus continue in the Word of the Lord, as earnest and sincere disciples, we shall indeed "know the truth," be "established in the present truth" (the truth due, and be "rooted and grounded in the truth;" we shall be "firm in the faith," and "able to give a reason for the hope that is in us," to "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints," to "war a good warfare," to "witness a good confession," and firmly to "endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ." even unto the end of our course. We will not come into the knowledge of the truth at a single bound; but gradually, step by step, we will be led into the truth. Every step will be one of sure and certain progress, and each one leading to a higher vantage ground for further attainments both in knowledge and in its blessed fruits of established character.

The truth thus acquired, step by step, becomes a sanctifying power bringing forth in our lives its blessed fruits of righteousness, peace, joy in the holy Spirit, love, meekness, faith, patience and every virtue and every grace, which time and cultivation will ripen to a glorious maturity.

And not only shall the true disciple thus know the truth and be sanctified by it, but the Lord also said, "The truth shall make you free." Those who have received the truth know by blessed experience something of its liberating power. As soon as any measure of it is received into a good and honest heart, it begins to strike off the fetters of sin, of ignorance and superstition, and of fear. It throws its health-restoring beams into the darkest recesses of our hearts and minds, and thus invigorates the whole being. Sin cannot endure its light; and those who continue to live in sin when a sufficiency of light has been received to manifest its deformity must inevitably lose the light because they are unworthy of it.

Ignorance and superstition must vanish before the light of truth. And what a blessed realization it is to be thus liberated! Millions are still under this galling yoke. Under its delusions they fear and reverence some of the basest tools of Satan for their oppression and degradation, because they hypocritically claim divine appointment; and they have been made to fear God as a vengeful tyrant consigning the vast majority of his creatures to an eternity of torment. Thank God, we who have received the truth have escaped that terrible nightmare, and the bondage of Satan over is us broken!

We are made free, too, from the fear that we now see com-

ing upon the whole world, as the great civil and ecclesiastical systems that have so long ruled the world are being terribly shaken. All thinking people are in dread of the possible outcome of anarchy and terror. And the alarm of all will increase as we near the awful crisis toward which we are rapidly hastening, and as the danger becomes more and more visible. Yet, in the midst of it all, and with the fullest assurance of the infallible Word of God of the terrors of the conflict through which the world will have to pass within a few years, the true disciples of Christ who abide in his Word are not afraid, but rejoice, because they know that God's object in permitting the storm is to clear the moral atmosphere of the world, and that after the storm, there shall come, by his providence, an abiding peace. Instructed in the truth, they realize the necessities of the situation, and have confidence in the divine providence that can make even the wrath of man to praise him.

Blessed promise!—"If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Dearly beloved, having received this favor from the Lord, shall we not continue in it, giving no heed to seducing doctrines? And shall we not be faithful to it under all circumstances, defending it against every assault, and with it bearing its reproach? Let us prove our appreciation of it by our loyalty and faithfulness to it.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

IMMORTALITY AND ETERNAL LIFE

Question.—We read in Rom. 2:7 that to those who by patient perseverance in well doing seek for glory, honor and immortality, God will render eternal life. Why this declaration, if immortality is a higher and more desirable reward than everlasting life?

Answer.—It is well that we should notice that the Scriptures treat matters from a broad standpoint; thus, although those known to us as the great company, who come through great tribulation (Rev. 7:14), are not called to such a position as they will attain, but merely get it as of the Lord's grace after they have failed in respect to their high calling: and none being called to this favor, it is not specifically mentioned in the Scriptures; nevertheless, provision has been made for them, and the holy spirit seems to have guided the utterances of the apostles in such manner that their language includes these as well as the overcomers. This class will seek the glory, honor and immortality; but through negligence to seek with sufficient diligence, and along the lines laid down in the Lord's Word, they will fail to attain these chiefest blessings, which will go to the little flock. Nevertheless, as the Scriptures declare, they and all who seek it in the appointed way, will gain eternal life, and that, after all, is the chiefest and greatest blessing and gift held out before us.

(2) *Question.*—Again in John 17:2 our Lord, in praying for his church, says, "As thou hast given him (Jesus) power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Why is nothing here said respecting immortality?

Answer.—For the same reason as given in the preceding answer. Furthermore, the context does not particularly state that the elect church only is referred to. Rather the fourth verse indicates the Sin-bearer's larger work in blessing all the families of the earth. By the Father's provision he, by his sacrifice, obtained eternal life "for all them that obey him"—not only for the little flock of the present time, but also for the larger flock of the coming age. Additionally, we notice that the eternal life granted to the Gospel church is only indirectly the gift of our Lord Jesus. As immortality was the Father's gift to his Son, so it will be the Father's gift, by and through the Son, to those who are members of his body—the true church. Indeed, the heavenly Father specially is declared to be the Father, or Life-giver, to all who attain to spiritual conditions, either as the Christ, the overcoming church, or as the great company who come through great tribulation. The eternal life which our Lord Jesus will give more particularly on his own account, will be eternal life to the world during the Millennial age—the eternal life which he gives to us of this Gospel age, reckonedly, in our justification by faith, the first step preparatory to our being begotten of the spirit by the Father.

WILFUL SIN IN THE "BODY"

Question.—In view of the statements in 1 John 3:6-9, may we not reason that if we have God's mind in us we, therefore, could not sin? and further, that it is impossible for us to sin in the body (of Christ)? or that if we commit sin it would imply that we were no longer members of his body?

Answer.—We understand the Apostle to teach that the holy Spirit of God is opposed to sin; that in proportion as we have the mind of Christ we will not only love righteousness but also hate iniquity. To our understanding the Apostle here refers to sin in its fullest sense; viz., wilful transgression of the divine law. Such a wilful transgression would imply that we loved the sin and hated righteousness; and hence, that if we ever had spiritual life we had lost it, and become spiritually dead—"plucked up by the roots."

We are to remember, however, that there are other sins not of this kind—not unto death. There are sins in which wilfulness is not complete, since they are the results of temptation, and sins that are the results of our own weaknesses through the Adamic fall. Such weaknesses and such stumblings under temptation belong to the flesh which is already reckoned dead (in the consecrated Christian) and is not reckoned of God as belonging to the new creature. Hence, such lapses from rectitude are not here designated by the Apostle as sins, nor are they so reckoned of God who judges us not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.

However, as we have heretofore shown, there are some partial sins—that is to say, they are not full sins in the sense of being thoroughly wilful and intentional transgressions of the divine law—they are weaknesses of the flesh, and yet perhaps in those weaknesses of the flesh the mind failed to be as strong and courageous as it should have been, and to some extent yielded to the wrong-doing. Since such wrong-doing is not approved by the Christian mind after the brunt of the trial has passed, it is not counted sin in the full sense of the word. It is, however, a misdemeanor, for which a measure of stripes may be exacted according to the degree of knowledge, and according to the opportunities for resisting the wrong course which were left unused. From this standpoint it is evident that a full, deliberate sin cannot be committed while we are in the body (of Christ), possessed of the holy Spirit and recognized by the Head. To commit such a wilful sin would involve our having left the head, abandoned his teachings and service and love, and hence it would involve our having left the body of which he is the head.

"THE EARTH ABIDETH"—"THE HEAVENS WAX OLD"

Question.—How are we to harmonize the statements of Eccl. 1:4, "The earth abideth forever," with Psa. 102:25, 26; Heb. 1:10; etc.?

Answer.—In both cases the word used indicates that the physical earth is meant. We harmonize them by understanding that the latter Scripture refers to the changes taking place as respects earthly conditions. This is signified by the illustration given, as a vesture (robe, coat). "Thou shalt fold them up, and they shall be changed;" as one would re-make or rearrange the drapery of a gown, so the Lord will change, rearrange, etc., the general matters pertaining to the earth. One such change took place at the flood, so far as we know, and we anticipate that some other change will take place in the near future, making the earth more fit than at present for the Millennial kingdom conditions. Additionally, we are to remember that the physical earth is used as the basis of a symbol, and that the symbolical earth refers not to the land, but to the people, the order of society, etc. In this view also we expect a great transformation, the turning upside down, or changing all round, by which the present social order will be transformed into a social order more acceptable to God during the Millennial age. The time of this change is near at hand, and when the present symbolical earth—society—shall melt like wax from the fervent heat of strife and anarchy, the symbolical heavens, or ecclesiastical powers, will also take fire, and pass away with a great noise, commotion, disturbance—both to be superseded by the new heavens and new earth condition (symbolical), the church, in glory, honor and power, and mankind under new social conditions.

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

From north to south mankind will meet,
To pay their homage at his feet,
While all the world shall own the Lord,
And savage tribes attend his word.

GOD'S SUPERVISION OF HIS SAINTS

"The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord, and he delighteth in his way. Though he stumble, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand."—Psalm 37:23, 24.

Calvinism has its good features as well as its bad ones. Its institutions meant the reaction of noble Christian minds against a false doctrine. The fact that these reactionists went to an extreme should not condemn them utterly, nor nullify the good features of their teachings. It is customary for the pendulum of thought to swing from one extreme to another, passing the central point of absolute truth. Indeed, we have every reason to believe that this is a part of the adversary's method in blinding the minds of those who are seeking truth. He would lead as far away from absolute truth as possible, either in one direction or the other in every reaction or reform; therefore, he seems to have taken an interest to the extent of helping the reformers to an opposite extreme.

During the "dark ages" the central thought of our text was lost sight of—the thought of God's care for each and for all of his consecrated people. The thought inculcated and generally held was to the contrary of this; viz., that the average man, even though a consecrated believer, is too insignificant for divine attention; that God had given over to the care of the Pope and the clergy the souls of his people. To so great an extent did this teaching prevail that the people subject thereto did not think of Jehovah as their shepherd; nor even of Jesus as his appointed representative shepherd; and did not think of approaching these in prayer, nor of having their divine oversight and direction in their affairs. On the contrary, if they had sins to be repented of, they were to go to the priest, make confession, and secure absolution. Had they requests to make, they were to ask the priest; or in prayer to approach some dead saint, requesting his mediation with some of the dead apostles or with Mary, the mother of Jesus, that they, in turn, might mediate with the Son Jesus, that he, in turn, might mediate with the Father, and that thus they might be brought to the attention of Jehovah and possibly get some fragmentary blessing as a crumb from the table.

The reaction of Reformation times was against all this sort of thing, and the central teaching of Calvinism was that God has a direct interest in all those who, through the merit of Jesus, become his children through faith and consecration. It is difficult to estimate how great has been the blessing that has come to the Lord's people through the revival of this doctrine of the primitive church. We must ever feel grateful to John Calvin and his coadjutors for the service they rendered to the household of faith in this particular,—even though we must, at the same time, thoroughly repudiate that feature of their teachings which passed to the extreme of declaring that as God had foreknown an elect church, the special and happy object of his care during this Gospel age, and to be exalted ultimately to the heavenly state, he had, on the other hand, predetermined the torture of all the remainder of the race, and had made ample provision therefor. God permitted (we may even say, used) Calvin and his associates in the presentation of an important truth, while at the same time he permitted them to attach to it this awful, blasphemous, God-dishonoring teaching respecting the non-elect. We thank God that, in his providence, we live in the time when it is due that his gracious purposes toward the non-elect should be clearly seen, and his character freed from the evil aspersions of such a theory.

Papacy's conception of the insignificance of man, even though a good man in the Lord's sight, is much nearer to the view of the natural, worldly man, than is the thought that all the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord. The natural man finds it difficult to believe in a God at all; as he looks about the universe his first thought of its immensity and intricacies, and of the greatness of the one who created all these things is speedily offset by the suggestion that possibly there is no God;—possibly there are "laws of nature" which form themselves and which operate themselves, and under which all things are and shall ever be. He is encouraged in this line of doubt by the views of some, known as Scientists, Evolutionists and Higher Critics. Though none of these have the temerity to declare point-blank that there is no God but nature, they, almost without exception, show that this is the leaning of their minds, the tendency of their thought. They have not yet discovered any form of life which has not in some sense or degree been transmitted from some other living thing. They are looking for this, however—earnestly looking for it and expecting it, and quite ready, if they can find it, to claim that all life, all being, is the result of a law of evolution, and needed no interference by a Creator, even at the beginning. From this standpoint, and especially backed up by the high authorities of our day, scientific and religious, the natural man feels skeptical about a God at all, and concludes that if there is a God he is so concerned and occupied in his own personal affairs and in the affairs of other beings in other worlds, that the hundreds of millions upon this planet are in his sight and estimation but as so many mites would be in man's estimation. These are little inclined to think that all the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord.

As Calvin's day was a time of reaction from a wrong thought toward a right one in this particular, so, today marks another crisis. We are living in the time of reaction against the right thought on this subject, and in favor of the wrong thought. In early times in all the theological seminaries, as well as in the great colleges and universities of Christendom, the teachings were distinctly adverse to the sentiment of our text, and at very most allow that mankind as a whole is possibly under some kind of divine supervision and care; though the sentiment seems to be that God knows and cares much less for the poor groaning creation than did its theologians, publicists and reformers.

There is a reason for all this, to be sure. The wheels in the divine plan are so large, and the hands on the divine clock move so slowly that the natural man perceives no movement—fails to realize that God is working all things according to the counsel of his own will. Lacking the instruction of the divine Word; worldly wisdom sees not the purpose of the permission of "the present evil world;" nor how the lessons and experiences which it is giving to all mankind will eventually work out a great blessing, as part of man's needed instruction; to be followed by his instruction in righteousness in the Millennial age, soon to be ushered in. Wordly wisdom sees not the object for which the church is now called out from amongst the world and shaped and fitted and polished, by trials and difficulties and contact with evil, for the glorious work of the future,—of blessing all the families of the earth. And not seeing these things,—not seeing the object of the permission of evil, not seeing why God has delayed the binding of Satan, the overthrow of his power and the release of the bonds of superstition and blindness with which he has enslaved the masses, it concludes that God is indifferent, and that all the provisions and arrangements for social uplift depend upon the wisdom and the benevolence of men.

How thankful should be our hearts, as we realize the divine favor which has rescued us from this blindness which is upon the world, and particularly upon the great and worldly-wise of Christendom! The knowledge granted us of the plan of the ages saves us, not only from the bondage of priestcraft and superstition of the "dark ages," but it saves us also from the evolutionary unbelief which is now sweeping over Christendom, and robbing all who have not the light of the present truth of their joy in the Lord, their peace, their confidence, their trust in him.

We thank God for the ability to grasp this blessed promise of our text (and scores of others of similar import) and to rejoice in them, strong in the Lord and in the power of his might; saying, "If God be for us who can be against us [to any avail]?" If God so loved us while we were yet sinners, much more does he love us now that we are his people. (Rom. 5:8, 9) He who has begun a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it unto the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. 1:6) Since we are the Lord's, and have these various assurances of his Word, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called [ones] according to his purpose."—Rom. 8:28.

Let us not, however, apply our text carelessly; let us note carefully that it does not apply to all mankind, but to the "good." The thought here is evidently in harmony with the statements elsewhere, to the effect that God's care is over the *righteous*, as when we read, "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish." (Psa. 1:6) "The Lord knoweth them that are his." (2 Tim. 2:19) Looking about us in the world we inquire: Who, then, are the righteous? who are so good as to be properly called God's people? Hearkening for direction from the Word of the Lord we hear the answer, "There is none good, save one, that is God;" and, "There is none righteous, no, not one." These testimonies of the Word fully correspond to our own findings; for in ourselves, as well as in others, we find imperfection,—unrighteousness. But how can these testimonies of the Scripture be reconciled?—that there are none righteous, none good of all the Adamic race, and yet that God declares that all the steps of a good man, all the ways of the righteous, are under his supervision? We answer that the Scriptures explain how these statements are in full accord; that there is a class of

people in the world who, at one time, were children of wrath even as others, but who have been reconciled to God through the death of his Son, their ransomer. These have come into accord with God in the spirit of their minds, in their hearts; —their wills are in accord with the divine will. Their deficiencies, which are still known to themselves, and some of them sadly apparent to their neighbors also, are not deficiencies of the will, of the heart, of the intention; and the terms of the New Covenant being applied to these in advance of the world, their blemishes are reckoned as covered in and by the merit of their Redeemer's sacrifice. Thus God declares that he can be just, and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus—of him who trusts in Jesus, and through Jesus, accepts forgiveness of sins and full reconciliation to God's will, so that he desires to sin no longer. These are the "righteous"; these are "his"; these are the "good" of our text. Oh, blessed class! Oh, happy people! A peculiar people, prospectively a royal priesthood unto God—the "elect" church.

If we call attention to the fact that none others than these righteous, good people are under the divine supervision, and guaranteed that all things shall work for their good, our object is not to discourage others; but to rightly inform them of their position, and to remove from their minds any false hopes and delusions they may have been entertaining—to the intent that by proper acceptance of God's favor in the ransom, and a full consecration to him, they may at once attain to this position of reconciliation, and relationship of sonship, and become heirs of this and all similar promises.

Who has not noticed that people who would not admit that they are God's children, who are not believers in the redemption, and not consecrated to the Lord, will in times of trouble go to the Lord in prayer, and take from his Word and apply to themselves such promises as this of our text? Yet this is all wrong if they are still "children of wrath." And if they have seen the open doorway by which they might approach God and attain to membership in his family, and if they have disdained these and neglected them, what effrontery it is on their part to approach the Lord in time of trouble! and how great is their credulity when they delude themselves into thinking that any of these promises would be applicable to them! We are not seeking to hinder any from coming to the Lord in a proper manner in their seasons of distress; but we are wishing to be understood that sorrow, even sorrow for sins, is not repentance; and that sorrow and trouble do not constitute doors of access to divine favor, and that then, as ever, no man cometh unto the Father but by the Son—"through faith in his blood." We would encourage any, who, passing through trying experiences, and feeling the need of a Savior and a great one, come to God in faith and in consecration, and thus put themselves under his protecting care; but even then we would advise them that it had been better had they come to the Lord before the trouble;—better had they calmly, deliberately, dispassionately, thought over his goodness and greatness, and their own insufficiency and need, and the reasonableness of their consecration and the privileges of accepting God's favor in Christ, and coming thus under his exceeding great and precious promises to them that love him.

Some may here inquire: What constitutes justifying faith? We answer: It is a faith in God, based upon and in harmony with all that he has revealed. Abraham believed God and was justified by his faith; yet his faith was far less comprehensive than the faith which justifies God's people today; because, in the meantime, God has unfolded and expanded his revelation. Abraham's faith took in all that God had promised; viz., the blessing of the whole world of mankind through his posterity; and his faith evidently grasped the thought that this implied a resurrection of the dead, not one which would concern his posterity only, but which would embrace also the families of the earth which had already passed into death. He could not do more than believe this, and in some respects it was a severer test of faith than is our larger faith of today. For he could not see how God could be just and yet be the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus; while we, standing on this side of the great ransom sacrifice, can see the *modus operandi*. Justifying faith today, however, must believe the record which God has given us of his Son. It is not sufficient that we recognize Jesus as one of the noble men of our race, nor even that we should recognize him as the chiefest member of it. God's revelation is more than this, and, hence, our faith must be more. We must grasp by faith that he was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate" from the sinner race;—that he left the glory which he had with the Father, and took the place and condition of the first perfect man, in order that he might redeem him and all of his race which had come under his condemnation to death. We must believe further, that our Lord Jesus gave himself a ransom for all. We must believe, further, that this was a satisfactory ransom, or purchase price for the world—that it sufficed as an offset for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world. We must believe that the Father evidenced or testified to this perfect obedience, in that he raised him from the dead; that he ascended up on high, appearing in the presence of God on our behalf, making mediation for our iniquities, through the merit of his sacrifice; and that we are accepted in the Beloved, whom God has highly exalted, and given a name, authority and power above every name; and that he is Lord of all; we must accept him as our Lord, our Master, and must, to the extent of our ability, seek to walk in his ways—not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

But after we have attained this position, and after the promise of our text, and all like promises, are ours, it requires time and a continual application of faith, in order to rightly appreciate God's promises, and to appropriate them to ourselves! and this is Scripturally called "growing in grace and knowledge." We grow in knowledge as we take note of the promises of God, and by faith apply them to ourselves, and seek to discern in our lives the fulfilment of those promises; we grow in grace simultaneously, for unless each item of knowledge be received into a good and honest heart, and bring forth its measure of obedience and righteousness (grace) we will not be prepared for the next step of knowledge, and would be thus stopped, or possibly turned back. And as a loss of knowledge would mean a measurable loss of grace, so also a loss of grace would mean a corresponding loss of knowledge;—going into darkness, the promises of the Lord's Word becoming more and more dim and obscured, in proportion as our goodness or grace would be lost in worldliness or sin.

The Christian, as a disciple of the Lord, as a pupil in the school of Christ, is being fitted for a place in the Millennial kingdom—for a share in its glory, honor and immortality. It is required of such pupils that they shall give diligence to learn to appropriate the instructions of their teacher, else they will not be prepared for the glorious things to which they are called—they will fail to make their calling and their election sure. Hence, we see the necessity for the frequent admonitions of the Scripture, that the Lord's people shall be awake; not of those who slumber; not of those who are idle; not of those who are overcharged with the cares of this life; but that they be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Their service toward the Lord is primarily the bringing of themselves into as close harmony with the Lord's will, and into as close likeness to the divine pattern as possible; and secondly, it is that by precept and example they may help others of the called ones in the same narrow way.

There is danger that some may misunderstand the meaning of our text, and suppose it to teach that every incident in the life of God's people is what and as he intended it to be; —that God arbitrarily interferes in the affairs of his people, sets aside their free agency, and forces them to take this step or the other as mere machines. This is a serious mistake. No such thought is contained in the words. God has shown us his good pleasure in such matters; for although he could have made us like wagons or wheelbarrows, to be pulled or pushed regardless of any ambition of our own, he did not so make us, and seeketh not such to be his children—the recipients of his favors. On the contrary, he made man a free moral agent—in this respect a copy of his Creator, free to will as he may please. Although we are not always free to do as we may please, we are always free to will as we may please, and, as already seen, in the present time the Lord is dealing with his people according to their wills. And if God respects the will of the natural man, much more would he respect the will of the new creature in Christ Jesus, begotten of the holy Spirit.

Our text presupposes that in the class described the human will has been transformed;—that the divine will has been accepted as instead of the human; and that the child of God is seeking to walk in the ways of righteousness, in which he has already started; and the proper thought to be gathered is that thus seeking to walk in the Lord's ways, God will not permit his imperfections of judgment to work him any injury, but will supervise his affairs; will overrule so that every step he may take, although it be taken of his own will, his own volition—his consecrated will, however—shall be overruled for his good; for his development as a new creature in Christ. If he shall err in judgment, and bring upon himself the consequences of his error, the Lord's wisdom and power are such that he can fulfil all the provisions of this promise, and make even his blunders and weaknesses to so react as to strengthen his character and establish him in righteousness, developing in him by these and other experiences the fruits and graces of the spirit, which will eventu-

ally fit and prepare him for joint-heirship in the kingdom.

Another Scripture gives us a suggestion respecting our part in the ordering of our steps. It represents the Lord's people as praying, in harmony with the Lord's provision, saying, "Order my steps in thy Word; and let not any iniquity have dominion over me." (Psa. 119:133) This is the proper course for the Lord's people; to seek to walk carefully, circumspectly; to take heed to the instructions of the Lord's Word, so that thus their mistakes, their blunders, may be fewer and fewer, as they grow in grace and grow in knowledge of the Lord. But meantime, in connection with all of the weaknesses and imperfections incident to our imperfect bodies, we all have need of special comfort and consolation which the Lord has provided us in our text. It is the source of weakness in many of the Lord's people that they do not properly grasp by faith this and similar promises; for only in proportion as they have this faith and grasp these promises can they be buoyed up by this, and be encouraged to press along the line for the mark. This means faith toward God, and we readily admit that the "babes" in Christ cannot exercise as much faith in respect to these promises and experiences as can those who are further advanced; and yet we see continually that it is not years alone that tell in Christian development; that the growth of the Christian in grace and knowledge depends chiefly upon his faith, his love, his zeal.

"According to thy Word,"—should not be misunderstood to mean that God orders the affairs of his people, only in the way of commands and advice given them in his Word. Ah! had this been true, how many now rejoicing in the light of the Lord's favor might have become outcasts long ago! How many have failed to take heed to the directions of the Word, whose steps, nevertheless, the Lord has ordered or directed; —according to his Word;—according to his promise! When the wrong path was taken, and the Word neglected, and the privileges of Christian brotherhood neglected, and thus the way made ready for a complete separation from the Lord and the truth,—then, perhaps, the Lord ordered the way, according to his Word, in sending disappointments, financial or social, or sickness of body corresponding to the sickness of the heart;—and thus, perhaps, he brought back his wandering sheep, "according to his Word," making experiences and trials work out for his highest good.

Thus, in his Word the Lord promises the crown of life to the zealous soldiers of the cross, and assures us that the careless shall under divine providence have their steps so ordered that they shall receive "stripes," chastisements, to awaken and rescue them;—so that they may be "saved so as by fire," and come up through great tribulation,—even after they have failed to gain the "abundant entrance" of the kingdom class. Let us rejoice in thus having our way committed to the Lord; but let us take earnest heed to our own steps also, that we may walk in the footsteps of our Master in the narrow way, and thus also inherit with him the glories promised.

Likewise we should expect the Lord's guidance of our temporal affairs and particularly in respect to our service of the truth. We should not only give heed to the Word and its spirit, but additionally we should keep watch for the leadings of divine grace;—opening or closing doors of opportunity, and thus leading us, if faithful and obedient, not only into all truth, but also into fuller liberties and opportunities for serving it to others.

We must not overlook the latter part of our text—the assurance that though the child of God may stumble at times in the way, these will never mean to him an utter fall, because his hand is still held by the Lord! What a comforting thought is here! How well calculated it is to deliver the Lord's people from utter despondency in respect to themselves and each other! The all-important thoughts to be kept in mind are, Am I still the Lord's? Am I still trusting in the precious blood? Am I still consecrated to the Lord and his righteous way? If these can be answered in the affirmative we can still realize that we are God's children, and that our hands are still in his; that the spirit of begetting and adoption, which began in us the new life, has not perished; and that it is God's will that we should recover ourselves as quickly as possible from any stumbling, and looking well at the difficulties and trials which led us into it, we should fortify our characters against those difficulties as respects the future, and thus go on really stronger, because of our difficulties, and yet all the while realizing that our recovery from the difficulty was not of our own strength, but because of our trust in the arm of the Lord, to which we are still holding.

The Scriptures which speak of the natural branches of the olive tree, and also the ingrafted branches of the wild olive, continuing to be branches only so long as they continue in the relationship of faith (Rom. 11:17-21), are not to be ignored; neither should we forget our Lord's words, when likening his followers to the branches in a vine; saying, "I am the vine; ye are the branches;" he, nevertheless, pointed out that "every branch *in me*" that bears not fruit, the Father, the husbandman, taketh it away—it becomes refuse, never to be re-ingrafted but destroyed.

These and other Scriptures most emphatically teach the possibility, not of our stumbling as of accident, and being separated from the Lord, but of the possibility of our being separated from him through wilful disobedience and neglect of his Word and of the opportunities he has afforded us. He will not let us go so long as we are striving to walk in his way; but will order our steps so that they shall bring to us the best blessing possible, and will recover us and help us in our stumblings, because we are seeking and delighting to walk in his way. But if we lose this spirit, and become of a contrary one, if we fight against God,—if we resist the leading and guidance which he has provided in his Word and by his spirit, and if we seek to walk contrary to him, he will also walk contrary to us, and he will let go our hand; our stumbling then would mean our fall—we would be utterly cast down, and that beyond recovery, in the second death.

We do not, however, address those who are wilfully resisting the Lord and seeking to walk after the flesh and not after the spirit. We address those who are seeking the old paths; seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus; seeking to know and to do the Father's will, and whose discouragements are the result, not of wilful wrong, but of the weaknesses of the flesh against which they are continually striving. These the Lord would have us encourage, and draw to their attention the precious promises of his Word, and his assurances that "as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that reverence him."

REFORMATION COSTING SACRIFICE

ACTS 19:11-20.—MARCH 8.

"The name of the Lord Jesus was magnified."

Ephesus was in many respects the scene of the Apostle Paul's most successful work. He spent about three years there altogether, accompanied by Timothy, Erastus, Titus and, possibly, others. The influence of his work, either directly or indirectly, extended to other cities round about. It is supposed that it was during this stay at Ephesus that congregations were started in the nearby places, mentioned in Revelation as "the seven churches of Asia" (Minor). Our last lesson showed the Apostle beginning his work at Ephesus in the synagogue. He continued to present the truth until opposition to it became quite marked, and certain of the Jewish adherents began to speak evil of the teachings and of the believers. Then the Apostle and those who believed, unwilling to continue a condition of strife, discontinued their attendance at the synagogue, and began a separate meeting, apparently in a rented public hall, called "The School of Tyrannus," because, according to the custom of that time, it was used by him for this purpose in the forenoons.

The Apostle probably labored at his trade during the forenoon, and daily, during the afternoon, preached the message to such as had hearing ears, not only in the public hall, but also by visiting those whom he had reason to expect would be amenable to the gospel. We are supposing a continuance of his usual manner of life, describing in his first letter to the Thessalonians (2:9), "Ye remember our labor and toil, working day and night." The Apostle did not belong to a paid ministry. He had a message to deliver, which he appreciated so highly that he was glad of an opportunity to spend his life in its promulgation—using for other purposes only so much of time and energy as were necessary to procure life's necessities,—waiting for the great reward which the Lord has promised to all faithful servants of his cause. The Lord's ambassadors today can take no better pattern than his, if seeking with him divine favor now, and glory, honor and immortality by and by.

Satan's arts, employed in all parts of the world from the earliest dawn of history, have seen in the nature of wonder-workings, magic, etc. The Scriptures call our attention particularly to the magicians of Egypt, to the soothsayers of Babylon, and in this lesson show us that the same practises,

the same wily arts of the adversary, were general throughout the Roman Empire, and especially in the wealthy city of Ephesus. The Lord performed through the Apostle Paul, while at Ephesus, many marvelous healings of the sick, and other miracles, as well as the casting out of the evil spirits referred to in vss. 11 and 12,—doubtless as an offset to the blinding influence of witchcraft, magic, black art, etc. We may reason that the manifestation of divine power here was necessary to the establishment of the church, and to the general influence of the Gospel in that region—as an offset to the blinding influences of Satan's agents and power. The Ephesians were evidently so bound by these arts of the adversary that an exhibition of him as the real father of them was almost indispensable. Besides, the miracles wrought by Paul served as an endorsement of him as an apostle; an endorsement of his message of Jesus, the Redeemer; of a resurrection as a means of rescue from death, the wages of sin; of a Millennial kingdom as the means, or channel through which that rescue would come; and of the calling out of the church as the body of Christ, to constitute that kingdom, when, in due time, complete and glorified.

Perceiving the Apostle's power to be greater than their own, certain of the magicians essayed to use the name of Jesus as a charm or magic word, just as they were in the habit of using other magic words in their incantations. The effort of some of these, sons of one of the principal priests, resulted disastrously to them, and beneficially to many others. Addressing the one possessed of an evil spirit, they demanded that the evil spirit leave the vexed one, "in the name of Jesus whom Paul preacheth," as distinguished from others of the same name, for the name was at that time a common one. The demon not only did not obey the command, but using the possessed one, and exercising through him demoniacal strength, the seven men were wounded and put to flight, losing, at least, their outer garments.

This matter becoming widely known, was a convincing argument to those who had long had confidence in such wonder-workers, and proved to them that the Apostle's teachings were correct—that the black arts were of Satan, while the Apostle's miracles were of divine power. The resulting increase of interest in the truth shows us clearly that the people were previously duped and unable to discern the true message of God from the spurious teachings of Satan. This reminds us of the Apostle's words, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4:4) We may safely conclude that the same general principle prevails throughout the whole heathen world today, and to a considerable extent, also, amongst Christian people—that the alienation of many, and their opposition to God and his message through the truth are probably to be accredited more to ignorance than to evil preferences. How blessed is the assurance that ere long the Lord's power shall be exercised not only a little, as in the case under consideration at Ephesus, but universally, to the complete binding of Satan that he may deceive the nations no more until the thousand years of Christ's reign have accomplished their designed work of opening all the blind eyes, and permitting all who will to come back into full fellowship with God.—Rev. 20:2, 3.

The statement of vs. 18 is capable of two constructions: we might consider it as referring to those who practised magic, and understand it to signify that they confessed certain deceptions connected with their practises, and showed their deeds,—how certain tricks had been performed; or, (and we think preferably) the words may be understood to mean that many believers confessed the truth, and publicly showed it in the reform of their conduct. The latter view is supported by the statement of vs. 19, which seemingly refers to the whole number of believers, declaring that "not a few of them that practised curious arts brought their books together, and burned them in the sight of all."—R. V.

Satan's method of enslaving mankind seems to have been, from the first, largely through superstition. Gross superstition and darkness still dominate the great mass of mankind, and even where the blessed light of the Gospel lamp has gone, reproving the darkness, and setting forth the true way of life and blessing, the adversary has been enabled to follow, and more or less to attach superstitious rites and ceremonies, to the gross delusion of many known as civilized. We cannot doubt that the adversary is connected with many performances done in the name of Christian religion and with many of the miracles wrought by "holy nails," "bones," etc., etc., and is generally effective in holding the deluded ones back from the study of the Lord's Word, and an understanding of the great plan of salvation therein so clearly set forth.

The readiness of the adversary to use now any and every means available to hinder the light of truth, or to turn aside those who have already discerned it, is very manifest. Almost without exception, all the various persons and systems performing the "many wonderful works" (Matt. 7:22) of today, directly or indirectly antagonize the truth;—the ransom itself, the substitution of the life of our Redeemer for the life of the world, is generally ignored, if not totally denied by them. We are inclined to think that much of the mind-healing and hypnotism, coming rapidly into popularity, are merely adaptations of our old enemy to the new conditions of our day.

We have every reason to believe that the adversary would be willing to use the black arts today, as in times past, in proportion as conditions would be favorable; and incantation, by repeating certain seemingly meaningless words, is still practised by some; also the making of peculiar stews and broths, which are supposed to have magical powers, affecting love, hatred, etc., and the wearing of charms, the making of the sign of the cross in the presence of danger, etc., to protect from evil.

Such mispractises and misbeliefs assuredly have the effect of holding their victims in the bonds of superstition, hindering them from the proper exercise of the true faith in the almighty power of God, by filling their minds with errors and superstitions. Even brethren who have received present truth are not exempt from the adversary's besetments along this line. A number have written us regarding their deliverance from the snares of spiritism, and one came very nearly being entangled in the black art. He wrote us in substance, thus:—

"Dear Brother Russell:—You will rejoice with me, I am sure, that our heavenly Father has been pleased to give me a special and remarkable gift of healing in connection with one disease—every case that I have treated since I received the gift has resulted in a cure. It requires but a few moments in each case, the repeating of a few words. I make no charge for the service, as I am glad of the privilege of doing good in any manner to my fellow-creatures."

We responded to this, that we were glad to know of the Lord using any of his people in any manner; nevertheless, we felt curious to know what were the words used in this simple and effectual operation, and, hence, inquired for the formula. The reply came that the formula of words, etc., necessary to the performance of the cure could not be communicated from one man to another, but only from a woman to a man, and from a man to a woman—a peculiar restriction, to say the least, to apply to anything good. Upon giving the name of a lady to whom the formula could be sent, we received it, and found that it was simply magic,—the using of a few meaningless words in connection with a piece of string.

We wrote the brother at once, that we believed the cures he had been performing were not of the the Lord, but of the evil one, and advised that he discontinue them. He responded, thanking us, and assuring us that it had never occurred to him that a work of healing could be accomplished by any other than divine power, but that in the light of our suggestions he saw to the contrary, and would use it no more. However, the fame of his cures already performed brought him many applications from others in the same distress, who were indignant when he refused to go to their relief for either love or money; and upon his explaining that he believed the power he had used was of Satan they declared that they did not care, so long as the relief could be had. To what lengths the adversary may carry his delusions in this day and by up to date methods, we cannot surely know; but our expectation certainly is that his delusions will be numerous, and of the kind that would "deceive, if it were possible, the very elect," as our Lord foretold.

The sincerity of some of the converts at Ephesus was manifested by the public burning of the books in which were recorded the various magic words, and receipts, by which incantations could be made, affecting and counteracting various of the ills of life. All books at that time were precious, as they were made of skins instead of paper, and pen-printed instead of printed by type; but these books were specially high-priced because each possessor of a copy was interested in restricting the information and, hence, unwilling to permit the copying of his book. Viewed from this standpoint, the number of books would not necessarily be very great to amount to the considerable figure specified—50,000 pieces of silver—about $8,500, a piece of silver representing about 17 cents of our money. But, if we remember that each piece of silver represented a day's wages, it might be considered equivalent to at least $1, in our day, and thus the total value of the books would be $50,000.

This considerable sum was freely sacrificed to the Lord and to the truth;—not that the Lord accepts as sacrifices

any evil thing, such as those books were, but that the destruction of the books, representing a considerable value, represented also a sacrificing condition of heart. The books had a commercial value, and could have been sent to some other city and sold for a large sum, but this would have been spreading the evil which they were recognized as representing, and we note with pleasure that they who gave up the books were unwilling to sell them, and thus risk injuring others, nor did the Apostle suggest that the books might be sold and the money turned into useful channels in the service of the Gospel. The Lord's people are never to do evil that good may follow. We are reminded of a liquor dealer, who pursued a different course;—concluding that his business was dishonoring to the Lord's cause and injurious to his fellowmen, he determined to abandon it; but instead of destroying the liquor by emptying it into the sewers, he sold it. We may be sure that he failed to get the great blessing which evidently came upon the more proper disposal of the evil things, narrated in this lesson.

The Lord is not poor; all the gold and silver are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. It is not necessary, therefore, to his cause that we shall put into it anything that in any sense or degree represents evil. In our opinion those who burned the books on "black art" were not only more blessed themselves, but they more honored the Lord and more advanced his cause, by such heroic treatment, than if they had sold the books and put the money into the treasury of the Lord. Everything throughout the Scriptures seems to teach that the Lord specially loves and appreciates those who are thorough-going, not only in their zeal for righteousness and truth, but also in their opposition to that which is unrighteous and erroneous.

We believe that the same principle applies to the sale of books which inculcate Satan's lies, and we recommend that if the Lord's people have books of this kind, black with false doctrines, misrepresenting the divine character and plan, they would do far better to burn them, to put them where they will not endanger others, than to sell them and to give the proceeds to the Lord's work.

With such a spirit prevailing amongst the believers—such a willingness to give up things contrary to the Lord, and that at a cost to themselves, involving, no doubt, a change of occupation, we cannot wonder at the statement of the last verse of the lesson, that "so the word of the Lord Jesus grew mightily and prevailed" over the evil influences opposing it. So it will surely be with the Lord's people today; where the proper zeal for the Lord and for righteousness are in the hearts of his people, the effect will be telling upon all with whom they come in contact.

THE RIOT AT EPHESUS

ACTS 19:29-40.—March 15.

"The Lord preserveth the faithful."—Psalm 21:23.

When Paul had spent nearly three years at Ephesus he purposed going again to Jerusalem, but before doing so would visit the churches of Macedonia—Philippi, Berea, Thessalonica and Corinth. He sent two of his helpers, Erastus and Timothy, in advance. (2 Tim. 4:20; 1 Cor. 4:17-19) It was this visit to Corinth that he evidently referred to in his epistle to them. (1 Cor. 16:1-4) He proposed taking contributions from them to the poor in Jerusalem—not as seeking a gift, but as seeking evidence of their love for the Lord, in their desire to be helpful to the brethren at Jerusalem, who were chiefly poor, and greatly disadvantaged by their loyalty to the truth. Apparently also the Apostle was planning a later tour, which would include Rome—little suspecting that he would be sent to Rome as a prisoner.

About this time occurred the riot described in this lesson, which probably would have determined the Apostle to leave Ephesus, if he had not already purposed so doing. The Lord permitted persecutions to drive him out of every place—thus seemingly indicating the proper time for terminating his ministry at each point. The account says, "There arose no small stir about that way." Very evidently the "way" of the Lord's people differed decidedly from the ways of others, not as concerned their future hopes only, but also regarding their course in the present life. All things become new to those who receive the *new mind* of Christ; and although their "way" may seem to the unbelieving to be a narrow and troublesome one, to themselves it is the way of peace and joy and blessing and harmony with God, and, ultimately, the way of life eternal. And the way is the same to this day, as concerns those who are faithfully walking close to the Lord and to the teachings of his Word. The difficulty with many is that they have gotten out of the way—so that nominal church ways are, alas! too much like the ways of the world, with very similar hopes, aspirations and endeavors.

In Ephesus there were trades-unions or guilds, and Demetrius, the leader of the riot, belonged to the guild of the silversmiths—probably its president, or chief. There is a stone now in the British Museum which was found at Ephesus, on which is engraved an inscription concerning a certain Demetrius. It is said to belong to about the date of this lesson, between A. D. 50 and 60. The name occurs again in 3 John 12, where the Apostle mentions the person as a Christian of good report. Quite possibly the reference is to the person who led this riot, and who may afterwards have become an active Christian, as he was at this time an active opposer of Christianity, and a supporter of Diana;—even as Paul, the zealous persecutor of the church, became its zealous servant. The probability that this was the same Demetrius is strengthened by the tradition that the Apostle John with Mary the mother of Jesus afterward made Ephesus their home.

Demetrius called together not only the men of his own craft, but those also of allied crafts. The finest of the shrines, or miniature temples of Diana, were made in silver, but others were made of inferior metals and of marble, and the cheapest of terra cotta. These shrines were manufactured of various sizes and in great quantities; not only for the people of Ephesus, but for export to various other cities and provinces where Diana was worshiped. The business was a profitable one, as Demetrius acknowledged; and it was upon the selfish instincts of the workmen engaged in this business that he based his strongest appeal,—that this Paul was turning away much people from the worship of Diana, not only in Ephesus but in the surrounding cities and provinces. His reasoning was that if the people lost their respect for Diana and her temple, they would no longer purchase the shrines, and that the falling off in demand would mean loss for all engaged in the shrine business.

The argument of Demetrius inflamed the selfish sentiments of the allied crafts of shrine-makers—they became full of wrath, increasingly as the argument went on, and as they seemed to realize the ultimate discredit of Diana and ruin of their own business interests. They began to shout in a frenzied manner, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" doubtless inflaming themselves and others more and more with every shout, until a large mob, collected, which they led toward the theater, or Coliseum, variously estimated to hold between twenty-five and fifty thousand people. As they went they seized two of Paul's companions, taking them along, as though intent upon bringing charges against them, and having them summarily dealt with. Paul, full of courage, would not have been willing to allow his companions to endure the brunt of this difficulty alone, but would have gone to them and endeavored to secure the attention of the mob and to reason with them; but leading men of the city, who were his friends, cautioned him, in the interests of peace, not to do this.

The uproar and excitement were intense, the majority not knowing certainly why they were there, but being in full sympathy with the cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" they surmised that some insult or opposition to their religion had occurred. It was for this reason that when Alexander, motioning to them for silence, endeavored to make a defense, the people, though they recognized him merely as a Jew, and not as a Christian, clamored so as to make it impossible for him to speak, realizing that all Jews were opposed to their goddess and her worship. The senselessness of their proceeding is clearly manifest in the fact that they kept up a meaningless shout for two hours! It is worthy of note here, that in proportion as people approach the proper conceptions of the divine character and plan and receive of the spirit of the Lord, in that same proportion they have greater soundness of mind. Consequently, we see that amongst Christians some who have made little growth in grace and knowledge are content to spend hours in shouting or talking about that which has comparatively little meaning; but in proportion as any grow in grace and knowledge they become partakers of the spirit of a sound mind, and correspondingly unwilling to waste either consecrated time or energy senselessly, unreasoningly. In other words, rejecting the wisdom of this world, and accepting the wisdom from above, they are as a result the more reasonable.

By this time the town clerk (or recorder or mayor, as we might term him) arrived, and quieted the people, and made them an address consisting of four arguments. First, he appealed to their patriotic sentiments; that they were citizens of a great city, and that people far and near recognized Ephesus as temple-keeper for Diana, and suggested that since this was so well established as a fact they ought to do nothing rashly, for there could be no necessity for haste. Whatever might happen to Diana and Ephesus there certainly was no immediate danger. That temple of Diana was indeed a wonderful structure. Respecting it history says: "The crowning glory of Ephesus was the great temple of Artemis, or Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world. It glittered in brilliant beauty at the head of the harbor, and it was said that the sun saw nothing in his course more magnificent than Diana's temple. Made of the purest marble, it was 425 feet long, 220 broad. Its columns of Parian marble were 60 feet high, and 36 of them were magnificently carved. The hall was adorned with the most wonderful statuary and paintings."

The town clerk's second argument was that the men whom they had brought with them by violence, and against whom they seemed incensed, were not bad men—they had not been trying to rob Diana's temple, nor had they blasphemed the goddess herself. Very evidently the prominent men of the city, without accepting the Gospel preached by the Apostle, had received favorable impressions of it, and realized that their teachings did not develop bad citizens, but that they were, on the contrary, amongst the most honorable, peaceable, law-abiding, of the city. His words give us another thought; viz., that the Apostle, in his preaching, did not specially attack the errors of heathendom—idolatry, etc., but that merely denying all other gods, he preached the one true God and his message of mercy, the Gospel—the better "way." There is a lesson in this for the Lord's people to this day—"Go thou, and preach the Gospel." Let others, if they will, smash the images and attack the various vices in and out of the nominal church systems. In preaching the gospel we shall have quite a sufficiency to do, so long as this present age continues.

The town clerk's third argument was that this was a quarrel of Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen, and not a quarrel of the public in general; and that if any injustice had been perpetrated there was a proper channel of redress—the courts of law, attorneys, etc.

The fourth argument was that if this were not a dispute merely between Demetrius and his class and the propagators of Christianity—if the assembly had any other matter on which to charge them, they should bring them at the proper time, and in the lawful manner, when regular assemblages were had for the trying of cases. (Dr Hovy remarks, "An inscription found in this very theater in which the words were uttered, illustrated their technical sense of the word 'lawful'. It provides that a certain silver image of Athene shall be brought and set at every (regular) assemblage, above the bench.") The town clerk pursued this last argument, pointing out that the meeting was nothing short of a riot and that if it were reported to the Roman authorities and an inquiry made of him, it would reflect to the discredit of the city that such a turmoil had occurred without reason. His intimation was that there might be danger of the city losing a privilege which it had long enjoyed—of being a "free city." His speech shows clearly that even amongst the unbelievers of that time there were men of reasonably sound judgment.

Alas, that there are even today so many of the same disposition as Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen! The principal opponents of present truth are professed ministers of the gospel; and so far as we are able to discern, their opposition is inspired by the same selfish spirit which incited Demetrius and his associates—their craft is in danger—their salaries are endangered—respect for them and their teachings on the part of the people is endangered. It will not at all surprise us if ultimately their opposition to the truth shall lead to something analogous to this riot at Ephesus. Then we shall expect that they, like Demetrius, will not set forth the real secret of their opposition, but base it on the broader grounds of hostility of the truth to the great system of errors, misnamed "Orthodoxy," chiefly built by Antichrist, and known in the Scriptures as "Babylon."

THE ONENESS OF THE DIVINE FAMILY

"I pray for them . . . which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them."—Jno. 17:9, 10.

There is a touching pathos in this prayer of our Lord for his disciples as he was about to leave them, which draws us very near to his loving heart; especially when he adds, "Neither pray I for these alone [then present with him], but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one—I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them as thou hast loved me."—Verses 20-23.

As we come to consider this beautiful expression of the Lord's sentiments with reference to the church, we catch a glimpse of the glory of the blessed oneness of the divine family. It is a oneness of purpose, a oneness of confidence, a oneness of sympathy, a oneness of love, a oneness of honor, and a oneness of mutual posesssion. This oneness our Lord described as already existing between himself and the Father, but so far as his disciples are concerned it was and still is only prospective; and its full accomplishment is the ideal goal toward which we are taught to aspire.

But let us study this exemplified oneness more closely that we may be enabled the more fully to enter into it. In the first place we notice that the one purpose which is common to both the Father and the Son is the Father's purpose, which was gradually revealed to the Son in due time and order, whose it also became by adoption. Since Jesus himself said, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" only (Mark 13:32), it is manifest that the revelation of that plan to him was a gradual one; and that he was led into the knowledge of its various features as they became due to be worked out through his instrumentality. Thus he was allowed to *grow* in knowledge; and thus, too, he was spared the sad spectacle of subsequent trouble which also lay along the pathway of the divine plan. Thus, while he joyfully worked out the grand plan of creation (John 1:3; Prov. 8:22-31), he probably knew nothing of God's purpose for the subsequent permission of evil and the necessity for the great work of redemption. Before he came to that test of faith in God his confidence in his almighty power, wisdom and love had been firmly established by the experiences of the past. For centuries he had seen his mighty works, marked his wondrous wisdom and experienced his tender love. Could he doubt him, then, when another feature of his plan made manifest the great work of redemption and restitution, and gave to him the privilege of understanding this work also, for the joy that the Father set before him? No; doubtless he did not at first realize the depths of humiliation and sorrow through which he must pass; but step by step, along the painful way of humiliation and suffering, his faith in the Father, founded upon his previous experimental knowledge, sustained him, as it is written—"By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many."—Isa. 53:11.

We next notice between the Father and the Son a beautiful oneness of confidence. The Son trusted the Father fully—at first, because it was easy and natural. Created in the likeness of God, trust in the Being who brought him into existence was spontaneous, and experience served but to develop and establish it. And the Father trusted the Son fully—first, because he recognized in him the inherent principles of righteousness and truth and filial loyalty which he himself had given him; and, as the course of time and experience developed and the more firmly established his Son in righteousness, his confidence in him became firmly established. And so strong was the Father's confidence in the subsequent fidelity of his beloved Son, that he did not hesitate to declare the results of his faithfulness thousands of years before he even began the work of redemption. He even declared all the special features of the work, by the mouth of his holy prophets at various intervals for four thousand years before he began the work. And still he declares that the work shall in due time be gloriously accomplished. How wonderful and how beautiful is this mutual confidence!

We further notice a oneness of sympathy between the Father and the Son. The Son glories in the Father's plan, saying, "I *delight* to do thy will, O my God." He delighted in it because he discovered therein the worthy features of his Father's glorious character; and though his faith may have been temporarily tested by the permission of evil, his knowledge of God's character and resources, and of the depth of his wisdom did not permit him to doubt, but held him still in

loving trust in his infinite goodness and grace, and, therefore, in readiness to acquiesce fully in the measures proposed for the final triumph of righteousness and truth.

And the Father was likewise in loving sympathy with the Son, not permitting him to be tried above what he was able to bear; and not leaving him to bear any trial alone, but always granting him the light of his countenance and a joyful sense of admiring approval (John 11:42; Matt. 3:17), except when, for our sakes, he permitted him for a moment to feel that he was forsaken; when, in the anguish of his soul, he cried out at this unusual experience, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Now, mark the oneness of love manifest. In every act we have already noted we have seen it expressed. It was mutual love that delighted to manifest and express mutual confidence, that gloried in the same loving and benevolent purposes, that sympathized fully with each other's thoughts and feelings, and that delighted in the close and blessed relationship of Father and Son. The Father did not treat the Son as a servant and hide his purposes from him; but delighted to take him into his confidence in so far as his wisdom and prudence dictated—*i. e.*, as the truth became meat in due season to him. And, in turn, the Son did not serve the Father as a hireling, but as a son with a common interest. The Father declared, "This is my beloved Son;" and the Son said, "I *delight* to do thy will."

How blessed the fellowship! It was a fellowship of joy and a fellowship of suffering—of joy in a common anticipation of the future glory; and of suffering in mutual participation of the preliminary trials to secure that end. The Son suffered in his humiliation and his dying agony; and the Father suffered in giving his only begotten Son—an intensity of suffering which the loving, yearning hearts of devoted parents can best imagine and appreciate.

There was further a recognized oneness of possessions clearly expressed by our Lord, who, declared, "All things that the Father hath are mine." (John 16:15) And the Apostle says, God hath appointed the Son the "heir of all things," and hath "set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."—Heb. 1:1, 2; Eph. 1:20, 21.

And, lastly, we notice a oneness of honor. In honor each seems to prefer the other. The Father says: Let all men honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. (John 5:23) God has made him the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, and exalted him to his own right hand, to the chief seat of power in his kingdom, giving him all power in heaven and in earth.—Heb. 1:2, 3; Matt. 28:18.

In the work of creation he has set him forth in great prominence and glory, saying, "Without him was not anything made that was made." In the work of redemption and restitution God has set him forth so prominently that his name is the theme on every tongue, almost to the eclipse of the Father's own glory, who of necessity is himself greater than the Son (1 Cor. 15:27), and to whom the glory preëminently belongs, as the Son also declares, saying, "My Father is greater than I;" and again, "I can of mine own self do nothing;" "the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."—John 5:30; 14:10, 28.

The Son's corresponding anxiety to glorify the Father is most marked in the instance when, realizing that he was approaching the dreadful hour of his dying agony he exclaimed, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name"—even at this cost to me . (John 12:27, 28) Again we hear him say, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." (John 17:1) And when the great work of redemption and restitution is accomplished, we see him delivering up the kingdom to God, the Father, and subjecting himself to his further direction, that Jehovah himself may be universally recognized as all in all. (1 Cor. 15:24, 28) And we, like him, may surely trust that his purposes for the ages to follow will but the further express and emphasize the same lines of his glorious character—his justice, his wisdom, his love and his power.

Glorious oneness! who could suggest an improvement to its wondrous beauty and completeness? But the wonder and joy increase when we learn that it is also *our* privilege to come into this same blessed oneness with God. What! we inquire—the very same oneness as above described? Yes; undoubtedly it is our privilege to enter into the very same relationship and privileges and blessings. To this end consider the exceeding great and precious promises and see that it is ours to have the same oneness with God—of purpose, of confidence, of sympathy, of love, of honor and of possession.

The same plan of God is presented to and adopted by us, and we also are invited to become co-workers with God, in carrying it out (2 Cor. 6:1); and in so doing we are counted in with Christ Jesus as filling up the measure of the sufferings of the anointed body necessary to the accomplishment of that plan. Our heavenly Father also similarly manifests his confidence in us—in the loyalty of our hearts toward him and in the sincerity of our consecration to him—even though he recognizes our inherent weaknesses and our inability to carry out fully our own determinations. But, notwithstanding this, so great is his confidence in our sincerity and integrity of heart, that, on our profession of faith and consecration, he fully accepts us as his sons and heirs, supplementing our weaknesses and shortcomings with the all-sufficient merit of our Redeemer, in whom we humbly trust. And not only so, but as sons, honored and beloved, he makes known to us, also, his secret counsels, which others cannot know (Matt. 13:11), and invites us to confide in him as children, and to speak to him freely of all that concerns us, in full assurance of his loving interest, even in our smallest affairs. (Psa. 103:13, 14) And then he commits a portion of his great work to us. He gives us certain talents, certain portions of his goods, and tells us to invest them for him according to our best judgment as to the profitableness of the results, not dictating all the minutiæ of the management as to hireling servants, but merely submitting to us the general principles which should govern us. Thus, for instance, he gives us his plan as to the work in hand, with such general directions as, not to cast our pearls before swine; to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves; to give meat *in due season;* to do good to all men as we have opportunity, but especially to the household of faith; and to observe the times and seasons, and the character of the work in each — seed-sowing in the spring, and reaping in the harvest time; etc., etc. Thus with general directions he sends us forth—not like machines, to do a monotonous treadmill service, but as intelligent beings, to use our brains as well as our hands and feet. So he counsels us to "*study*" to show ourselves workmen approved, and to *consider* and *think*, and not to be "as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle." (Psa. 32:9) Then, according to our zeal and faithfulness, not only in the use of our hands, but also of our brains, in the Lord's service, his confidence in us increases and we are entrusted with more and more of his goods and given a corresponding sense of our heavenly Father's approval. And the mutual confidence and fellowship of purpose and work, draw our hearts closer and closer to the heart of the Eternal, and the joyful realization of sonship and mutual interest and confidence and sympathy fills our hearts.

We are also assured of the same love from our heavenly Father which he exercises toward our Lord Jesus. The statement seems almost startling, but yet, hearken to our Lord's prayer—"I pray for them . . . . that they may be one . . . . that they may be made perfect in one . . . .that the world may know that thou hast . . . . loved them *as thou hast loved me.*" (John 17:20-23) In amazement we inquire, How can this be? Our Lord Jesus was always in perfect harmony with the Father; a son who gloriously reflected his likeness; but it has not been so with us: we were sinners and had nothing in us worthy of love. Yes, but we have been washed and cleansed, and, however imperfect our earthen vessels may still be, our hearts are perfect in his sight who is able to read the heart. And, as he sees us with a perfect heart—a perfect purpose and intention—striving to overcome the weaknesses and disabilities of our imperfect flesh, and with painful, yet determined, effort to do his will, and humbly trusting in the provisions which he has made for our redemption from the fall, God recognizes in us that which is worthy of his love. And so our Lord Jesus gives us clearly to understand that the Father loves us, even as he loved the Son.

And not only is this equality of the Father's love for us as for Christ Jesus thus declared, but it is also manifested; for we are called to be *joint-heirs* with his Son, and partakers of his glory; and even as all things are his, they are also said to be ours.—Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 3:21-23.

While such is the oneness between the heavenly Father and all his anointed sons, it is blessed also to mark the same oneness between Christ Jesus and his anointed brethren. The Lord Jesus does not selfishly grasp all the glory and seek to retain it for himself, but the rather with admiration he contemplates their acquired worthiness and says, They "are mine and I am glorified in them" (John 17:10); and he would have them all bound together with himself in the Father's love. He would also have them with him, beholding and shar-

ing the glory which the Father had given him from the foundation of the world—the glory of his mighty creative works, with all the other evidences of his Father's love.—John 17:22-24.

Thus all the divine family are bound together in one bond of love and fellowship and confidence and sympathy and harmony and common interest; and the honor and glory of one are the honor and glory of all. The Lord's prayer abounds with petitions for this oneness. Mark the expression (verse 21)—"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, are in me and I in thee" [thy spirit or disposition and purposes and aim being common to us all]. Hence, he would have us adopt the same Father's spirit, aim and purpose, and devote all our powers with zeal and faithfulness to the accomplishment of the Father's will. Amen, so let it be.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

ANCIENT TABLETS AGREE WITH THE BIBLE

In view of the fact that most lecturers on the Babylonian excavations are endeavoring to prove that their findings date back thousands of years before the flood, and hence are in total disagreement with the Bible narrative, the following testimony to their corroboration of Scripture is the more appreciated. Excavators seem prone to "magnify their office" and to make their services and findings more wonderful than they really are.

"Dr. Albert T. Clay, curator of the Babylonian department in the museum of the University of Pennsylvania, lectured in Widener hall yesterday on 'The Old Testament in the Light of Recent Excavations.'

"'Accounts of the creation and deluge,' he said, 'have been deciphered from early Babylonian monuments. No direct account has been found referring to the fall of mankind, although engraved rocks representing a man and woman sitting under a tree, with a serpent near by, have been found, which undoubtedly refer to it.'

"The lecturer went on to show that the events recorded in the Bible had taken place contrary to what had been contended by critics of the Old Testament in the past few years. He presented a photograph of an engraved rock referring to the deluge and translated it. Although the period of time which elapsed while Noah was in the ark did not exactly correspond to the number of days given in the Bible, yet the historical significance of the event was corroborated. Dr. Clay presented many such photographs, all of which had been excavated in Babylonia, and are now in the museum. The translations of these were parallel accounts to passages found in the Bible.

"He further said: 'This work is yet in its infancy. Research has not yet come to a limit. The lowest excavations show civilization in advanced stages and there is every reason to believe that future excavations will bring to light the majority, if not all, the history recorded in the Old Testament.'" —*Philadelphia Times.*

A STATESMEN'S VIEW OF EUROPE'S FUTURE

A Philadelphia *Ledger* correspondent writing of the eminent correspondent of the *Times*, M. de Blowitz, deceased, says:—

"Blowitz believed that his own forecast of events was more accurate than that of any living statesman. He not only placed himself on an intellectual level with Bismarck, but he spoke of himself as belonging to the same rank. I am not at all sure that he was not right, and that if his early lot had been cast in high places Blowitz would not have been a greater man than Bismarck. He had his faults and vanities, but he was a man of extraordinary capacity.

"His opinions about the future of Europe are interesting, because his predictions were so often fulfilled, and his views, therefore, on the subject are worth consideration. As far back as ten years ago de Blowitz held that in the course of a generation Europe would be a congerie of bankrupt states; that all the national debts in Europe would be repudiated, with the exception of Britain's, and that vast social changes, involving bloody wars and reigns of terror, would come to pass in many countries. He took a pessimistic view of the future of Britain, though he admired the qualities of persistence and freedom, which form part of the British character.

"He believed that the twentieth century would be a century of struggle, and that in Germany and Russia especially the development of the industrial idea would lead to the evolution of new surfaces of society, just as the iceberg which has changed its centre of gravity presents a new profile to the spectator. If these predictions had been made today no great power of discrimination would be credited to the prophet. To have formed such views ten years ago implies the possession of great analytic power, coupled with imaginative faculty."

* * *

This is interesting, as showing how the wisdom of this world corroborates the forecast of prophecy—the revelations of the divine Word. "We have a more sure word of prophecy, unto which we do well to take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place until the day dawn."—2 Pet. 1:19.

CHRISTIAN SOLDIERSHIP

We are pleased to credit the following article to a secular journal—the *Atlanta Constitution*:—

"Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."—2 Tim. 2:3.

"The service of Christ resembles no other so much as that of a soldier. There are few life-callings among men that demand such absolute self-surrender from the recruit as that of the soldier. . . .

"In the decision to be a soldier one subordinates all other considerations—those of self-will, family supremacy and the varied opportunities of the freeman. It is to go under a vow of complete, unquestioning obedience to the orders of superiors. It is to abandon home for the camp, to forego the right of first serving the interests of father and mother, wife and children, business or friends. It means the entire suppression of every selfish interest for the advancement of the supreme cause one has contracted voluntarily to serve, to follow and for which, if need be, to die.

"It seems hard to some minds to compare the service of Christ with that of a good soldier. Nine-tenths of those who call themselves Christians refuse to give their service that significance, and mutiny outright when called upon to act upon that principle. The weakness of the church universal as the leader of morals and life culture in the world is due to the fact that most Christian men and women serve Christ as independent camp followers. They are unattached, or uncommanded, or disobedient to the duty of discipline, and do as they please rather than as they are obligated by the commands and principles of Christ.

"Goethe said that 'earnestness is eternity,' and the spirit of God is the spirit of earnestness. He who is informed and inflamed by that spirit will be filled to overflowing with zeal, courage, daring, fortitude and the faith of conquest. In the fervor and forcefulness of these feelings he will serve his Master, as the soldiers of Alexander followed unquestioning where he led; as the soldiers of Leonidas, who died rather than retreat; as the soldiers of Napoleon, who believed him invincible always; and as the soldiers of Lee, who felt that he could not lead them wrongly or to defeat.

"If Christ possessed in this world today an army of men and women one-hundredth part the figures of official Christendom, who would follow him—who would labor, fight and endure as do the soldiers of our American armies—he could not long be kept from his world-wide conquest.

"But he has few real soldiers in his service. Most of his followers are pensioners, pleading always that he will do something for them—ease their pains, disperse their enemies, smooth their paths, increase their fortunes and bed them in places of plenty and comfort. They are a hungry and a helpless host.

"One would expect naturally to find in the pulpits stalwart captains of the army of our Lord. And yet how few are they who do not look more closely to their hire than to their opportunities to endure hardness? They are eager for rich and easy pastorates, they dwell in luxuries and preach as those who make pleasant music on a lute. Transfer them to posts of poverty, scant rations, hard service among the poor and the sick, and they become broken-hearted over their lot as soldiers!

"The true soldier does not debate his cause. He is rightly supposed to have settled upon its justice and righteousness before he enlisted to serve it. Thereafter he avouches it and defies contradiction of it. He is ready to spend all and be all spent in its defense. He does not fight for the rations that are doled to him, but for the great principles and great purposes of the cause to which he is committed. . . .

"No man should deceive himself in a matter so plain and serious as the service of Christ. If he doesn't mean to abandon himself to the commands and demands of his Master, he ought to be honest enough not to offer a hypocritical profes-

sion and a treacherous or abortive promise of service. The causes of Christ on earth need men who are strong in will, courageous of heart and hardened to self-sacrifice, sufferings and the perils of conflict and death. None other can do the work that is needed to pull down the strongholds of sin, rout the enemies of righteousness and set forward in hostile territories the standards of the kingdom of Christ.

"It is glorious to serve Christ in honesty and in fulness of fidelity. There is an ineffable joy in being on the right side, in knowing that one's service is toward victory and that beyond the field of blood and the valley of shadows is an abundant entrance into the joys and peace of the triumphant King of kings. For that hope none should shrink from the harness of battle, none quail before the rage of the enemy, and none tremble before the certainty of hunger, thirst, nakedness, wounds or death!"

THE EVOLUTIONISTS' TREND

The *Western Recorder* tersely expresses the truth, thus:—

"When a man starts on the line of evolution and higher criticism he gives up more and more, and he has no logical stopping-place till he has given up everything. The frantic efforts of those who start on this line to hold to 'what is vital,' while giving up more and more, are pitiful. Their claiming that 'after all we have this or that much left' is simply whistling to keep their courage up. They have surrendered everything, and have left themselves at the mercy of the enemy. As George Adam Smith says, it is left only for the critics to fix the indemnity, and to take all they want, and everybody ought to have learned that they want everything. With them 'progress' means to deny more and more. And their work will not be done as long as any belief is left."

THE EDITOR'S VISIT TO EUROPE

For several years the Editor has been promising the friends abroad that as soon as the sixth volume of MILLENNIAL DAWN series would be ready for the press he would comply with their many urgent invitations for a visit. From present appearances he hopes, by April, to have the manuscript of Vol. VI. in the hands of the compositors, with also a sufficiency of WATCH TOWER matter to last during the four issues of the period of his proposed absence.

Not only does he anticipate joy in meeting many already known through correspondence, and new friends in Great Britain, but additionally it is his thought that a considerable extension of the service of the truth may be possible in Germany, France, Switzerland, Holland, Sweden, Norway and other European countries. He will make brief visits to these various countries, conferring with the friends, and ascertaining, so far as he can, the advantages and opportunities of the present time.

Announcements for TWO-DAY CONVENTIONS for the trip are as follows:—

London, England	April 25, 26
Stockholm, Sweden	May 2, 3
Glasgow, Scotland	May 9, 10
Liverpool, England	May 16, 17
Thun, Switzerland	May 23, 24

"WHATSOEVER HE SAITH UNTO YOU, DO IT"

JOHN 2:1-11.

These were the words of our Lord's mother to the servants, at the marriage in Cana, about the time of the beginning of our Lord's ministry—our Lord, his mother and his disciples being guests at the wedding. There was a shortage of wine, it will be remembered, and Mary evidently expected our Lord to exercise his power in some manner: although just why she should expect this is not evident, because we are distinctly informed that the miracle of turning water into wine was the beginning of Jesus' miracles. (Vs. 11) And, by the way, this distinct statement by the Apostle John, gives emphatic contradiction to the apocryphal legends which accredit to our Lord various miracles, etc., previous to this time.

How suitable are Mary's words to all of the Lord's people: "Whatsoever he saith unto *you*, do it!" How important that all should learn the lesson that it is not merely the hearing of the Gospel which brings blessing to the heart; but obedience to the glad tidings! Of course, it is necessary that we should believe the Master before we could be ready to obey him; yet the expression, "Whatsoever he shall say unto you, *do it!*" includes a faith in the Lord on the part of all those who are obedient. The Christian cannot do better than adopt these words as one of the mottoes of his life,—Whatsoever my Lord saith unto me, I will do it.

We are not to hear and to obey every voice, but, as our Lord himself said, "My sheep hear my voice, . . . and they follow me." (Jno. 10:27) There are many voices in the world (1 Cor. 14:11), some calling in one direction and some in another. The world calls us, the flesh calls us, the adversary calls us, and the Master calls us. The Christian may readily enough discern the voices of the world and the flesh, and should be on his guard against their seductive influence. But he may have more difficulty in discerning between the voice of the adversary and the voice of the good Shepherd, because the adversary's method is to simulate, or counterfeit, the voice of the Shepherd. His usual methods of reception are through false teachings backed by human organizations; the whole being made to appear as a message of light through messengers of light. (2 Cor. 11:13, 14) Christians need to be specially on guard on this point; many are hearing and adopting the voice of the Pope, others the voices of Presbyteries, Conferences and Councils, which hinder them from hearing and obeying the voice of the Shepherd. They have need to remember that the proper course is to "take heed that ye refuse not him which speaketh from heaven"—"Whatsoever *he* shall say unto you, do it."

Hearken to his words! "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you." (Jno. 14:34) "If ye love me keep my commandments." "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." (Jno. 14:21) "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." (Matt. 10:37-40) He speaks again and says, "Blessed are the meek, the merciful, the humble-minded, the peacemakers, the pure in heart and those hungering and thirsting for righteousness and enduring persecution for righteousness' sake"—"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven." He saith to us again,—"Ye are the salt of the earth and the light of the world;" "let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—Matt. 5.

From heaven, he continued to speak to us through the Apostles to the same effect:—"Present your bodies living sacrifices to God, holy, acceptable, your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1) "Love as brethren; be pitiful, be courteous." (1 Pet. 3:8) "Laying aside every weight, run with patience the race set before you, looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of your faith." "Laying aside all malice, and all guile and hypocrisies, and envies and all evil-speaking, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby." And "giving all diligence add to your faith fortitude; and to fortitude knowledge; and to knowledge moderation; and to moderation patience, God-likeness, brotherly-kindness, love."—1 Pet. 2:1; 2 Pet. 1:5.

We have heard his words. They impress us as being the very essence of wisdom and righteousness. We know that he is faithful who has promised that if we *do these things* we shall never fall, but be granted an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom. We have taken the first step of belief; we have taken the second step of response, and have agreed to do these things; the important question with each one of us, therefore, must be—Am I obedient to him from heaven who speaketh? Am I doing whatsoever he says? To whatever extent any shall find shortcomings on the line of obedience to the Shepherd's voice, to the extent of ability let him beware and arouse himself, promptly, energetically to do these things; for the Father also saith, "This is my beloved Son: hear him!"—Luke 9:35.

Returning to the narrative: We note our Lord's command to the servants to "fill the water-pots with water." Re-

membering the statement of the prophet, corroborated by our Lord's own words "without a parable spake he not unto them," we are inclined to surmise that this, his first miracle, contains some spiritual lesson for us. Endeavoring to draw such a lesson from this miracle, in harmony with the general testimony of the Word, we reason thus: The water-pots symbolize the Lord's people; their number, six, might indicate that it refers to the Lord's people in the present time of evil, because the number six is a symbol for imperfection and evil condition, as seven is the symbol for completeness and perfection. Thus six days of the week are set apart for labor, while the seventh is set apart for rest and refreshment: likewise the six thousand years of the world's history are permitted by the Lord to be evil, through man's disobedience and fall; while in the seventh thousand God proposes to bring in his Millennial kingdom—his reign of everlasting righteousness.

The water with which the water-pots were commanded to be filled, is in Scripture the symbol for the truth, the "water of life"; not merely the word of truth, but the word accompanied by and infused with the spirit of the truth—it is with this that the Master commands that we shall be filled. In the symbolic miracle the servants obeyed; not doubtfully or slothfully did they fill them half full, but, as it is recorded, "They filled them up to the brim." So it should be with us; having heard the Master's word, "Be ye filled with the spirit," we should draw abundantly from the fountain of grace and truth, nor cease until we are filled with the spirit "to the brim" —completely. And if we so do the Master's commands, what may we expect as a result? We may expect, as illustrated in the symbolic miracle, that the water will ultimately be changed into wine—the symbol for unalloyed pleasure, heavenly joys.

In the symbol the miracle of *change* from water into wine came only to those vessels which were filled to the brim with water; so, likewise, the Lord has promised a still greater change to his faithful followers who receive the treasure of divine truth, and its spirit into their "earthen vessels," and who are filled with it. They shall be "changed" in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, under the sounding of the seventh trumpet; they shall be changed from the human nature to the divine nature; from earthly conditions to heavenly conditions: this greater miracle, yet to be accomplished by our Lord, was well symbolized in the change of the water into wine—the joys of the kingdom, the joys of the new nature. The Lord's consecrated people are symbolized not only by the water-pots and by the servants who fill them, but also they are symbolized by the bride at the marriage, just as the bridegroom is also the one who commands that the vessels be filled with the water. The governor of the symbolic feast who pronounced the new wine to be of the very finest quality, aptly symbolizes the heavenly Father who is the great Governor of the great feast associated with the union of the heavenly Bridegroom with his bride, and the excellence of the wine represents fitly the joys of the Lord with which we shall be filled at our "change." Already we share to some extent in the blessings of this union; already we know something of the joys of our Lord; already we taste not only of the cup of his sufferings, but also "have tasted that the Lord is gracious." Already we partake of the wine on the lees, and the fat things full of marrow (Isa. 25:6); but our present joys are but foretastes of the coming realities—the best of the wine comes at the end of the feast, when our heavenly Bridegroom shall have changed us to his own image and likeness that we may share his glory.

Oh, how important that we remember the words, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it!" 'Tis but a little time since we heard his voice directing us how our dearth of joy and happiness might be overcome, and how, instead of impurities and filth of the flesh, we might be filled with the truth, its spirit and its joy, and subsequently have the whole instantly "changed" to the perfection of joy,—into the divine nature. How are we heeding the Master's words? To what extent have we gotten filled with the truth and its spirit? He will give ample opportunity to each of us to be filled, and if any, therefore, is only partly filled, it will be because of a lack of the proper spirit of obedience. Our vessels may not all be of the same size; as with those in the symbol which apparently varied in size, holding from two to three firkins apiece, so our capacities, opportunities, etc., may vary; but, to fulfil the Master's requirement, each must be filled full,—no more, no less.—if we would experience the desired "change."

While this lesson evidently applies merely to the hearing of the Lord's voice by the church, during this Gospel age, the principle holds good also for the Millennial age. Now, the vast majority of the world do not hear the Lord's message of grace, and, consequently, are not responsible; but by and by all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and all the sin- and prejudice-blinded eyes shall be opened; and the Lord shall be recognized as the great Teacher, and all shall hear his voice. This is set forth by the Apostle Peter (Acts 3:22, 23); after picturing the great Prophet (teacher), Christ the head and the church his body, whom God is raising up during this Gospel age, and fitting for the great work of the Millennial age, he declares, "Him shall ye hear [obey] in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear [obey] that Prophet, shall be *destroyed* from among the people"—in the second death.

If the responsibility of those who will hear during the Millennial age is thus prefigured, and declared, so as to leave no doubt that "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" shall be visited upon all who shall then refuse to obey, what shall we say would be the result of a refusal now to obey on the part of those who hear the Master's voice during the Gospel age? We will not say positively that there is no hope for such; but we see little room for hope for such as, hearing the voice and recognizing it, make no effort to obey it. On the contrary, we hear the Apostle saying, "If we sin wilfully after we have *received a knowledge* of the truth" [heard the Lord's voice], after we have tasted of the good Word of God and been made partakers of the holy spirit, and [experienced in our justification] the powers of the age to come, there remaineth no longer a share for us in the great sacrifice for sin; but only a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which would devour us as adversaries who had despised the mercy and grace of God—Heb. 4:6; 6:4, 5, 10 26-31.

Hearken to the Apostle's words again, "See that ye refuse not him from heaven who speaketh." (Heb. 12:25) "We ought to give the more earnest heed to he things we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." . . . "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. 2:1, 2) So far as we may judge, the hearing of the Word of the Lord in every case brings with it responsibilities; and becomes "a savor of life unto life or of death unto death." We do not say that those who are partially negligent—who fail to fill their "earthen vessels" *to the brim* with the truth and its spirit—will be esteemed to have despised the words of the great Teacher; on the contrary, the fact that they are seeking at all to be filled with the truth and its spirit is an evidence that they have respect to the Lord's Word, and do not reject nor refuse "him that speaketh from heaven." But their failure to give diligence to be filled with the truth and its spirit will mean their loss of the great prize, the fulness of joy in the "change." These are they who neglecting to use their opportunities zealously, neglecting to be filled full with the spirit of truth, are correspondingly partially filled with the spirit of the world, and not accounted "overcomers" of the world. These are they who will "come up out of great tribulation," washing their robes in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. 7:9, 13-15) Losing the great prize because of a deficiency of zeal, these will, nevertheless, get a great blessing because they did not refuse "him from heaven that speaketh."

We must remember, however, that the hearing of the natural ear is not the only hearing to which the Scriptures refer. Hence, the expression, "He that hath an ear let him hear;" and again, "Ears have they, but they hear not;" and again, our Lord's words respecting the multitudes, "To them that are without, these things are spoken in parables, that hearing they might hear, and not understand." Our responsibility is not, therefore, marked by the opportunities of the outward ear. Many have heard with the outward ear who have never heard in the responsible sense of the Scriptures, in the sense that all eventually must hear;—in the sense of understanding, appreciating the message. The responsibility as to how we hear, and how we reject, is upon those who have an understanding of the Lord's grace. "Blessed are your ears for they hear, and your eyes for they see." But the blessing can only come to such as "refuse not him from heaven that speaketh." Let us all, therefore, who have heard the Master's voice, strive to remember his Word, as we have considered it foregoing: and let each of us seek to live as nearly as possible according to that Word. "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."

More glorious still, as centuries roll,
Shall truth's fair banner be unfurled,
Until in strength, from pole to pole,
Its radiance shall o'erflow the world—
Flow to restore, but not destroy;
As when the cloudless lamp of day
Pours out its flood of light and joy,
And sweeps the lingering mists away.

THE NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

EPH 2:1-10.—MARCH 22.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"*By grace are ye saved through faith.*"—Eph. 2:8.

It was from his Roman prison that the Apostle Paul wrote the Epistle to the Ephesians, one of the most beautiful of all his letters to the churches; full of deep spiritual instruction. Its keynote is "in Christ," this expression, or its equivalents, occurring at least twenty times in this Epistle. As the first chapter points out that the church is *chosen in Christ Jesus*, so our lesson shows that we have life in Christ alone; and, subsequently, the Epistle shows that all of God's blessings and favors toward his people are solely upon consideration that they are *in Christ Jesus*—members of the body of Christ, members of the new creation. None can get clear-cut, distinct appreciation of the Apostle's meaning except those who clearly differentiate between the church and the world, and discern their different hopes, built upon different promises; and perceive that in God's plan only the church is being dealt with at the present time—that the world's hope is future, and very different from that of the church, now being called as the body of Christ, "members in particular."

Our lesson opens with a dark picture, delineating the condition of the whole world through the fall; a condition of sin and worldliness under the power of Satan; in disobedience to God, under divine sentence of death, which has already operated to the extent of corruption in matters moral, mental and physical. The whole world, although creatures of God, and thus in a general sense his offspring, or children, ceased to be children of his favor, and became "children of wrath," through sin. The Apostle points out to the Ephesians that this had once been their wretched and terrible condition in common with the rest of mankind. How true is the picture even today! But let it be remembered that this is not merely the picture of the villains and outlaws of the world, but a picture of the world as a whole, including its very best representatives. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." All are "children of wrath"; all are more or less under the power and control of the great adversary; all are more or less controlled by the spirit of disobedience common to the whole world of mankind.

The only exceptions to this rule are the few who, like those addressed at Ephesus, have escaped this bondage, this corruption, this death state, this condition of alienation from God;—and surely these are few today, as they were in all but a "little flock" in the days of the Lord and at the time the Apostle wrote these words.

But the Apostle passes on to note what a great change came to the saints at Ephesus, on their acceptance of the gospel; and how glad we are that a similar change has come to all who have become the Lord's saints, from that day to the present time! The experience of passing from death to life is the same in every instance, although the circumstances connected with the transformation may vary considerably. The steps of grace by which the Lord delivered us from being children of wrath and under power of the adversary are set forth by the Apostle in the succeeding verses. Let us trace these steps, and note to what extent we have taken them, and to what extent our experiences correspond to those which the Apostle delineates.

Our recovery did not begin with something in ourselves,—good resolutions, good works, etc. We did not improve ourselves, and thus commend ourselves to God: on the contrary, God was the prime mover in our release and recovery. He was inspired to give us aid by the benevolence of his character, for he is "rich in mercy." He is rich in all of his attributes, rich in wisdom, rich in justice, rich in power, rich in love; but it is with the attribute of love and its corresponding benevolence, or mercy that the Apostle is here dealing. How necessary it is for us to get this thought of God's richness of mercy well rooted and grounded in our hearts—that we may never doubt his generosity, his kindness, his sympathy, his mercy toward all those who desire and seek to know and to do his will! We need great faith in our heavenly Father, and it is only as we come to a clear knowledge of his glorious plan through the Word that we can exercise such a confidence in his love and mercy. The adversary evidently desires that we should misunderstand our Creator, and, hence, has in every way possible sought to misrepresent his character and his plan;—and so successfully has he done so that at this very moment 999 out of every 1000 of those who profess his name are moved by fear of an eternity of torture, rather than by love for him and appreciation of his love for them.

The Apostle assures us that God had great love for us, even when we were dead in sins—when we were corrupt. It is difficult for us to think of God's greatness, purity and splendor of character, and of man's fallen condition—his corruption, mental, moral and physical—and then to understand how the holy Jehovah could have love for his fallen creatures. We may be sure that it was not the love of affection, such as he has for us now, as his sons, newly begotten of the spirit, but merely the love of sympathy. He beheld our miserable condition, and realized that an offer of release from our corruption, and of return to holiness and harmony with himself, would be joyfully appreciated and accepted by some—let us hope, by many;—and it was, undoubtedly, in view of such a response to his goodness and mercy that our Creator opened up for the world of mankind "a new way of life," in and through the Lord Jesus and his redemptive work.

But although this sympathetic love was toward the whole world, it has not yet been made generally known—it has not yet been practically exercised toward the world, but only toward a comparatively small proportion of the whole. Here and there the message has been sent to a special class—to those who have "an ear to hear"—the remainder being left for the present, to be dealt with later. (Isa. 35:5) It is to those who had the "ear to hear", and who hearing, have responded and laid hold upon the grace of God in Christ, that the Apostle is now writing. He calls attention to the blessing of such an experience. He does not here differentiate between those who have taken merely the first step of faith and obedience unto *justification*, and those who have gone on and taken also the second step of *full consecration* to the Lord, "even unto death"; but addresses the latter class only—those who, having made a full consecration to the Lord of their justified selves, have been begotten of the spirit, quickened and energized by that spirit as members of the body of Christ. The Apostle here interjects in parenthesis (2:5) a reminder that all this blessing has come to us, not of our worthiness, nor of our work, but by divine "grace are ye saved"; we reached this position in the new life, this reckonedly saved position, by faith;—delivered from the sentence of sin, saved from the darkness and delusion of the adversary.* saved from the wrath of God, and brought, instead, into his loving favor. Oh, how great is the salvation which accompanies a complete conversion and full consecration to the Lord! What a wonderful change it brings to us, in thought, in word and in act! And yet this is only the beginning of our salvation, or what the Apostle elsewhere speaks of as being "saved by *hope*." (Rom. 8:24) While thus saved by grace now, we are still waiting for a further salvation, by grace—"for the grace [salvation] that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"—the first resurrection.

All that, by the Lord's grace, we shall ultimately have through the "change" of the resurrection as members of the body of Christ—all the heavenly things, including full fellowship and communion with the Father and with our Lord—are reckoned as having their beginning in the present life. He, therefore, who knows not such a beginning of the new life, and its holy spirit now, has no reason whatever to believe that he has been begotten of the holy spirit—that he is a new creature in Christ. These new creatures are reckoned as having been raised up out of the state of sin and death into a new condition of life, and love of righteousness. Symbolically, they are ushered into the Holy of the Tabernacle, where they have the light of the golden lampstand, and partake of the spiritual shew-bread, and may offer the spiritual incense to God, and have fellowship with him "*in Christ Jesus*"—as members of the *Ecclesia*, "the church which is *his body*." This is a figurative resurrection from the dead—a figure and earnest of the real resurrection from the dead which shall come to each of these if they prove loyal to God and faithful to their covenant as members of the body of Christ—to be dead with their Head, that they may also live with him, through participation in his resurrection.—Rom. 6:5, 8.

Counting the new life as beginning now—counting ourselves as members of the new creation, which by and by is to be glorified, we ask ourselves with the Apostle, What great thing must God work, then, in us and for us, eventually, if present foretastes of his goodness and grace are so superlatively grand? The Apostle answers such a query (vs. 7) assuring us that "in the ages to come God will show forth the *exceeding riches* of his grace through [in] his kindness to-

* The Apostle was a firm believer in a personal devil, and a Bible study of his teachings on this subject would be profitable to many of the Lord's people in the present time, when, through Christian Science and other deceptive teachings, the very existence of the adversary is being denied, and thus many are the more exposed to his wiles and deceptions. Note the following references to Satan by the Apostles: Acts 13:10; 26:18, Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 5:5, 7:5; 2 Cor. 2:11; 11:14; Eph. 4:27; 6:11; 1 Thess. 2:18; 2 Thess. 2:9; 1 Tim. 1:20; 3:6, 7; 5 15; 2 Tim. 2:26. Our Lord also frequently referred to the adversary: Matt. 4:10; 12:26; 25:41; Mark 4:15; 8:33; Luke 10:18; 22:31; John 8:44; 14:30.

ward us [who are] in Christ Jesus." He does not attempt to tell us what these riches will amount to. He would have us see that God is rich in mercy, rich in grace, and rich in every other grand and estimable quality, and he would have us trust that so rich a Father will do for his adopted children "exceeding abundantly more than we could ask or think." Indeed, he assures us elsewhere that it is impossible for him to explain or for us to comprehend "the riches of our inheritance." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of *man* the things which God hath prepared for them that loved him; but God hath revealed them unto *us* by his spirit."—1 Cor. 2:9, 10; Eph. 3:19.

Nevertheless, the revelation by his spirit is only an approximate one. We cannot clearly discern those unseen things, we cannot comprehend them with our finite natural minds. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be;" but with the new mind we can, even though but vaguely, grasp the thought of our heavenly Father's riches of grace and love, and can draw analogies from the things of this present life, and thus gain some idea of the glorious things which await us. As we see our heavenly Father's provision for the natural man,—a little lower than the angels,—as we look at the beautiful flowers of earth, and taste of its delicious fruits, it is but another step for the consecrated heart to realize that the rich Father who planned so beneficently for his human sons, and who permits so many of these blessings to come to mankind, even in its fallen condition, is no less rich in love and mercy toward his spiritual sons, and will make abundant provision for them also. And that as he has provided harmonies of music for the natural ear, and pleasant odors and flavors and scenes for the senses of the natural man, so, only on a more exalted plane, there will be gratifications for all the high qualities of heart and of mind for the new creation;— there will be what will correspond to the present beauties of nature, but higher and grander, for those who shall gain the new nature. There will be that which will correspond to the flowers and the birds, the fields and the trees, the mountains and the valleys. There will be that which will correspond to the most delightful gratifications of the eye, the ear, the nose and the mouth, and to the most pleasureable thrills of the heart. Thus does faith, based upon a knowledge of the riches of grace and love in our heavenly Father, enable the new creature to see the things invisible and to rejoice in the wonderful things only partially disclosed at the present time.

From this exalted position and favor and fellowship with God, associated in the heavenlies in Christ, we are enabled by faith to rejoice in those promises of our Father's Word, which assure us that we shall be permitted to cooperate with him in the great work of the next age, the Millennial age, in showing forth his praises, in lifting up so many as will of the world of mankind out of their present fallen condition,—up to full restitution of that which was lost in Adam and redeemed by Christ.

We notice (vss. 8-10) how carefully the Apostle seeks to guard us against the thought that any of these blessings have come to us on account of our own merit. He reiterates, "By grace are ye saved through faith." And if by grace, no longer of works, as he elsewhere points out. (Rom. 11:6) If of works it would not be of grace. As members of the fallen race we were incapable of doing any work which our holy God could accept—we were dead, corrupted, foul, under condemnation as children of wrath, when he had mercy upon us, and opened up the way of life. Our present standing, therefore, as new creatures, is not the result of anything that the old creatures did, or could have done. It is not of ourselves; it is a gift of God. This lesson must be thoroughly appreciated, else we will be continually in danger of falling. The grace is not of ourselves, certainly, and we may say also that although *we exercised* some faith at the beginning (else we could never have come to him at all, to accept his favors), yet the faith by which we were enabled to accomplish our consecration even unto death, and thus to become new creatures in Christ, was not of ourselves—we had no such faith when God laid hold upon us. He developed in us that faith by the revelations of his love, through his promises, through his Word.

If our present standing were the result of our own efforts or "works," there would probably be some room for boasting;—it would imply that we were not so fallen that we could not have lifted ourselves out of the miry clay of sin,—on the line of the Evolution theory. But such theories are not recognized in the divine Word and must not be recognized by any who would maintain their standing as new creatures *in Christ*. On the contrary, so far from considering the new creature as an evolution of the old creature, the Apostle would have us understand distinctly that it is a new and separate creation. We were created in Christ Jesus, God's workmanship—prepared *for* good works, but not *by* good works.

The Apostle assures us that God foreordained that this new creation should progress in good works. To become new creatures in Christ we gladly surrendered our all to the Lord, that we might know his will and do it; and having accepted us in Christ, he informs us that it is his good pleasure that our entire life should be renewed, that we should discard entirely from our hearts, our minds, our wills, everything sinful, everything unholy, and that so far as possible our mortal bodies should be brought into subjection to our new minds, and that we should walk in newness of life, even on this side the vail—thus giving evidence of our sincerity, developing character and becoming meet "for the inheritance of the saints in light," in glory. Whoever is not disposed to walk in the Lord's way of holiness and opposition to sin, and in cultivation of the mind, the spirit of the Lord, the holy spirit, surely deceives himself, if he thinks he has passed from death unto life, and that he is a new creature in Christ Jesus.

REVIEW LESSON

MARCH 29.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"*Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world!*"—Matt. 28:20.

Reviewing the lessons of the quarter, showing the missionary labors of the Apostle, and introducing to us a number of his colaborers, our principal thoughts may well be that the same gospel is still being preached—Jesus and the resurrection;—that the privilege of being ministers of this Gospel, and colaborers with our Lord, is still open to us; that the rewards of such ministry may still be won by us; indeed, it is well that we get the thought that every member of the church glorified will have been an active member of the church militant—warring against the Adversary and his works, and influence. Whether our warfare be of the more public kind or of the more private sort, there must be warfare, and more than this, there must be progress and victory, else we can never be accepted of the Lord as "overcomers."

Another thought should be borne in mind by us all; viz., that while we have gifts differing one from the other, and are, therefore, able to contribute to the Lord's cause relatively larger or smaller amounts of energy or service or wealth, the Lord in making his estimate will take knowledge of the spirit which actuated us, rather than of the results secured by our efforts; so that of some small talent it may be said, as it was said of the poor widow who cast in the two mites into the Lord's treasury,—that the smaller gift was more appreciated by the Lord than some of the larger ones. In view of this, let us see to it, not only that we do with our might what our hands find to do, but also that our every sacrifice and gift to the Lord and his cause is so full of love and devotion that the Lord will surely approve it; as done from love for him and his, and not from vain glory.

The Golden Text of this lesson contains a precious thought,—that the Lord has been with his representatives in all their labors of love and self-denial, throughout the entire age, noting their efforts, assisting, encouraging, sustaining them, and surely watering and refreshing all who are making his service their special object in life,—ministering his grace to others, watering and feeding them. And if this has been true in the past, all through the age, how specially true we may realize it to be now, in the end of the age, in the time of harvest, in the time of our Lord's second presence! How we may realize that he is with us, in sympathy, in cooperation, in assistance, in sustaining grace,—able and willing to make all of our experiences profitable to us, and to use us abundantly in showing forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light!

Let these thoughts quicken us to fresh and greater energies, and to an appreciation of the fact that the things of this present time are but transitory (both its joys and its sorrows); and that the ambitions and hopes of the world are not worthy of comparison with these noble and laudable ambitions to serve and to please our Master, and to have his rewards—the chief of which will be fellowship with himself in glory, and the privilege of being colaborers with him in the blessing of the world,—the grand fulfilment of the heavenly Father's gracious plans for the world of mankind.

ABLE TO COMPREHEND WITH ALL SAINTS

EPH. 3:14-19.

"Procrastination is the thief of time," is an old proverb and a true one: and time lost means opportunities lost, and the advantages and privileges which went with the opportunities, also lost. If Christian people (all the truly consecrated) could get the proper view of the divine plan, and could see clearly, with the eyes of their understanding, the great work which God is now doing amongst mankind, and could see their privileges in connection therewith, life would become much more real, much more earnest, to them than it is. We do not mention the world in general, but recognize it as having no hearing and no sight for divine things now;—being blinded by the god of this world, and deafened by the babel and clamor, which he induces and perpetuates for this purpose. Thank God for the gracious promises of the Word: that in the new dispensation, under Christ's Millennial kingdom, all the blind eyes shall be opened, and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped. (Isa. 35:5) But, seeing that the world is blind and deaf, we pause not to attempt a miracle with its children; but follow the Lord's injunction, and speak, so far as possible, only to those who have ears. "He that hath an ear, let *him* hear."

Those who have heard in any measure,—who have seen to any extent,—who have tasted to any degree, that the Lord is graciously extending his favor toward all those who come unto him through the Redeemer, and who have thus come into the household of faith,—are privileged far beyond the masses of our race who are still aliens and strangers and foreigners to God. But one difficulty is, that through false doctrines instigated by the adversary, believers have gained so wrong a conception of the divine plan, and of the divine character formulating that plan, that they not only do not love God with all their heart, but, on the contrary, they desire to have as little to do with him as possible;—as little as will secure their everlasting escape from an eternity of torture, which they have been taught to believe he has prepared for the great mass of his creatures.

We cannot blame people, who view God and his plan from this false standpoint, if they take comparatively little interest in studying the Bible, which they believe is the revelation of these horrible preparations,—predetermined before the world was made. Our first effort in approaching the average Christian professor should be to anoint the eyes of his understanding with "the oil of joy," by briefly explaining to him the way of the Lord more perfectly. It is well to begin where God begins, and where the apostles begin the story of salvation; viz., with the cross of Christ. It is well to impress, first of all, that as a race we are all under condemnation through original sin, and that there is no escape for any, except through the Redeemer whom God has provided. Next, it is well to show just what the penalty is, that it is not eternal suffering,—torment; but eternal death, a death from which there could be no recovery,—annihilation. Next, it will be in order to show God's compassion in providing the Savior, who paid for us the very penalty against us—that in his flesh he "suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" (1 Pet. 3:18): that he did not suffer eternal torment, but the very penalty against us; viz., eternal death. Next, it will be in order to show that although the flesh of Christ was thus given up eternally, as man's ransom price, God nevertheless raised him from the dead, giving him a new life, a new being—making him a "new creature;" and that accordingly he is no longer a man in the flesh, but is again a spirit being, now of the divine nature, far above angels, principalities and powers.—Eph. 1:21; 1 Pet. 3:22.

Next in order it will be proper to show *how* the death of Christ could effect *all* mankind;—that it was because Jesus took the place of father Adam, and thus redeemed his life;—and because the whole race was condemned in Adam, therefore his personal redemption would imply, legally and justly, that the penalty was sufficient for the sins of the whole world condemned in him,—and not condemned on their own account. Next in order we should show that the object in this purchase of the world, was, and still is, that every member of Adam's race might have an opportunity, as Adam had, of showing the Lord his willingness to be obedient to him and to his laws, and thus to obtain at his hand the great gift of everlasting existence. To Adam only this will be really a *second* chance, as his race has had no chance yet;—being born in sin and under its penalty of death.

By this time your hearer should be ready to see that the trial which God proposes to give mankind is not such a trial as comes to a felon, a convict, before a criminal court,—to determine whether he is guilty or not guilty; for, on the contrary, in the case of mankind God already has determined that "*all are guilty*," that "there is none righteous, no not one." It is because such a trial would be a useless mockery, that nothing of the kind is proposed by the Lord, though this is the unreasonable thought common among his people. Seeing that we are hopeless as respects clearing ourselves, God has by his own plan and arrangement already paid the penalty for every man,—through the sacrifice of his Son. Hence, the whole world of mankind, when put on trial for life everlasting, will not stand trial as convicts, but as redeemed freed-men whose release from the original death sentence has been fully paid by the ransom-sacrifice of Christ. Their trial will be to determine their choice of lasting life or death—on God's terms—as Adam made choice in his trial;—to determine which they would choose after gaining a knowledge of sin and its penalty, everlasting death,—and a knowledge of righteousness and the reward of righteousness, life everlasting;—their choice being indicated by their obedience or disobedience to the divine mandates.

Whoever follows the plan thus far, is prepared to see that God has not yet given to mankind in general the great trial, or opportunity secured for all by the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus,—for testing their worthiness or unworthiness of life everlasting. All who are not grossly blinded by error and prejudice can see that a full, fair opportunity for judging between right and wrong, and for choosing the right and rejecting the wrong, has not yet come to the world as a whole. They can see that ignorance, prejudice and superstition are blinding the world still; and looking back along the aisles of history they can see that such blindness has been in the world for centuries;—since before the redemption price of the world was paid.*

If your hearer be of an inquiring mind he will now be questioning when or how a full knowledge and opportunity, or trial will, or could be extended to mankind; and this will be the favorable opportunity for reminding him of the Apostle's words, "God hath appointed a day [still future] in the which he will judge the world [not condemn the world, for the world is condemned already, for which reason Christ died for the ungodly;—but he will judge the world in the sense of granting all a trial] in righteousness [under righteous, favorable, just, reasonable conditions] by that man whom he hath ordained [the great Messiah, the Royal Priest, whose reign is to bring blessing and uplift to whomsoever will of all the families of the earth."] (Acts 17:37) It is of these times of blessing and restitution that the Apostle Peter declares that all the holy prophets since the world began have spoken. (Acts 3:19-21) And no wonder, since they spoke as oracles of God; for God has had this very purpose from the foundation of the world;—knowing in advance the course that sin would take, and the course which man would take under the delusions of sin, because of experience.

BEGINNINGS OF COMPREHENSION

As the mental eyes and ears of the believer begin to take in this fulness of God's provision for his creatures, his former fears begin to subside; and he begins to get a realizing sense of the goodness and love of God, as never before. But still he will have queries. He will want to know when this day of which the Apostle speaks will begin;—the day of the world's judgment, or trial in righteousness, under favorable conditions. He will want to know why it did not begin immediately after our Lord's death and resurrection,—if it waited for and was dependent upon his atoning work. This will be the proper opportunity for opening before the eyes of his understanding another department of our heavenly Father's gracious plan;—showing him what is so clearly set forth in the Scriptures; viz., that the Father has purposed an elect and select church to be as a bride joined to Christ, her Lord and Redeemer and Bridegroom;—as a special illustration of divine mercy and goodness, sharing his glory, honor and immortality;—"changed" to the divine nature in the first resurrection.

He now will begin to understand faintly what the Apostle meant when he declared, "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared [in reservation] for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit." (1 Cor. 2:9, 10) He will begin to appreciate the fact that when we enter the Lord's family and become members of the household of faith, we are only on the threshold, of knowledge and appreciation, and have need of progress and growth. He will begin to understand the force of the Apostle's words, when he said, speaking to Christians, and not to worldly people, "I bow my knees unto the Father, . . . that he would *grant you* . . . . that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ." (Eph. 3:14-19) As again he says, "I cease not to give thanks for

* See May 1, 1916, issue, page 133.

you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the . . . . Father of glory may *give unto you* the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."—Eph. 1:16-18.

It requires time for heart and head so to expand as to take in a glimpse of such a wonderful blessing as this which God has provided for the "elect." But whoever gets even a faint glimpse of the greatness of God's favor toward the church, will not be surprised that in the divine plan so liberal an allowance as nearly nineteen centuries was made for the calling and chastisement and perfecting of the saints for the great and glorious work to which they, as joint-heirs with Messiah, are called. Neither will they think strange, the fiery trials which try all of these whom the Lord our God calls, and accepts as probationary members of the elect kingdom class. They will perceive, readily enough, that if it was expedient, yea, necessary, that our Lord Jesus, with all of his experience in the heavenly courts, must "learn obedience by the things which he suffered," and prove his loyalty to the Father by faithfulness even unto death, much more must his followers—whose previous history was that of sinners—be tried and thoroughly tested in respect to their loyalty to the Lord.

From this standpoint, the experiences of Christians take on a totally new meaning; and those who have made consecration of themselves to the Lord realize that they are running for a mark, and for a prize; —no longer are their steps so unsteady, no longer are their hearts so faint and so careless, no longer do the world's baubles prove so enticing and ensnaring. God is thus working in them through the Word of his grace, through its exceeding great and precious promises. Through these he works in them to *will* to be faithful to him; and then to *do*;—conform their lives to the requirements of his Word. The same truth becomes also a power, a strength of God, in them, enabling them more and more to do those things which they should—the things pleasing in God's sight.

In this view, all is clear and plain; not only do we see that God permits evil in the world that the *world* may learn certain lessons of bitter experience, as to the natural rewards of evil doing, but we see also a ministry of evil in respect to the *saints*—in their testing and polishing and refining; making them ready, and proving them worthy, as overcomers, to inherit the wonderful things which God has in reservation for the faithful. This will be, to the intelligent believer, a full explanation of why God has not yet undertaken the blessing of the world;—of why the promises, made through the prophets, of a coming time when the knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth, and the curse be rolled away, have not yet been fulfilled. They can see that it is the rolling away of this curse, the wiping away of all tears, the bringing of blessings to mankind, that is the very work for which God has commissioned his glorified Son, and for joint-heirship in which he is selecting the bride, the Lamb's wife.

From such a vantage point of view, the most sluggish intellect will catch wonderful and refreshing glimpses of glory and blessing that are to follow, as soon as the present "ministry of evil" shall have accomplished its work. Looking into the future they begin to realize something of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan, and they will be ready to exclaim, "Oh, if God's plan is so great that it has required such a broad foundation, such great preparation, in the person of our Lord, and in the persons of his people who will be joint-heirs with him in the kingdom, how very great must be the blessing that shall be minister to the world through these, when the appointed time shall come!"

At first, the thoughts of the blessing coming to the poor groaning creation, and of the glories coming to the faithful and loyal and suffering saints, will overwhelm your auditor; and he can see and think of nothing else, for a while, than the stupendous grace of God manifested in this wonderful plan of human salvation. But, by and by, he will begin to think of himself, and what part he is privileged to have under the divine arrangement; and, as he sees a possibility of joint-heirship with the Lord amongst the faithful overcomers, he will find that all the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word, and the new hopes inspired thereby, will be an energy and a power in his soul which he never before knew;—a purifying energy, a sanctifying power. "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Instinctively he will begin to heed the Apostle's exhortation, to "lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us; and to run with patience the race that is set before us in the Gospel." —Heb. 12:1.

Soon after various exhortations of the Word will have a new and a deeper meaning to him. As for instance, when he reads the Apostle's exhortation, "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord" (2 Cor. 7:1), his words, his thoughts, his actions, his clothing, his personal appearance, will all come under inspection from a new standpoint;—he is no longer a condemned sinner, but a justified and sanctified son of God;—his representative;—his ambassador. It will be a new thought to him, to some extent, that cleansing the flesh is a part of the sanctifying work; and that a cleasing of the spirit or mind or thoughts or intentions, is equally necessary, —in order to the attainment of a condition of heart pleasing and acceptable to the Lord. And although he will never attain the perfection in the flesh, because of inherited blemishes, he will, nevertheless, assuredly make considerable progress in this direction; and not to see some progress should be a cause of disappointment, and should lead to self-examination at the mercy-seat. (Heb. 4:16) He will hear, moreover, the Apostle Peter's exhortation to the same class, saying, "Add to your faith virtue [fortitude]; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge self-control; and to self-control patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things be in you and abound they make you that ye shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." —2 Pet. 1:5-8, 11.

LETTERS OF INTEREST

DEAR MR. RUSSELL:—My sister and I are forwarding our susbscriptions for the WATCH TOWER for the ensuing year. You must get many letters of the sort that I am going to write to you, but you can never tire of hearing how our loving Father uses you for emancipating and feeding burdened and hungry souls such as we were before we read your books. We daily bless God for raising you up to be such an unspeakable blessing to us. The feast spread before us and the light shed upon God's Word almost overwhelms us at times. If you had known us two years ago! We were brought up with the doctrine of eternal misery of some sort for the vast majority, and only a few to be saved, drilled into us. We never really accepted it complacently, and in consequence we were in bondage for the struggling masses,—but I am sure you must understand all that we went through. For years we prayed that God would reveal himself in love to us, but did not understand in the least how he would do it; and now he has; and how fully only those who have read and love your books know. We love the TOWERS and look for them.

We both do what we can to spread the glorious Gospel of the love of God, but are most surprised to find that professedly Christian, consecrated people will not search the Scriptures to see whether these things are so, and have simply repudiated the subject. We cannot understand it. We have been used of the Lord for ordinary professors of religion and for people of the world, and have found some of them really hungry. We understand our Lord's words now, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Yours in our Redeemer and Lord, (MRS.) E. NEWTON.—*England*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Greetings to you in the Lord! My heart is filled with joy over the remarkable attention the truth has drawn in the Carnegie Hall meetings, and what a joy it must be to you to be the instrument in the Lord's hands to convey the wonderful message to "whosoever hath an ear." May God's blessings continue to rest on you richly and abound, and on your noble coworkers in the Allegheny church.

Just a few words about the class here. I think it is because the Lord has been opening my eyes more and more each month and filling my heart with heavenly blessings that I am able to see the wonderful growth of the others in our class. The spirit of love and unselfishness is growing very rapidly, for which we greatly rejoice in the Lord. We meet every Sunday afternoon for Bible study, and Sunday night we use our new Bibles and DAWNS and TOWERS. Wednesday evening we have a prayer and testimony meeting, and the last Friday evening of each month we meet for a song service and a general good talk along the lines of the truth.

There are quite a few getting interested and we feel quite encouraged. One of these was a very worldly man, and a

chance (?) sentence or two of mine one day in the shop raised a question in his mind which I was only too glad to answer. The seed seemed to light on good soil, and I gave him the first volume to read, then the second and third. Of course profanity had to go, and then tobacco and so on, and he is really making remarkable progress. Your brother in the Lord,

C. B. SHULL.—*Ohio.*

DEAR FRIENDS:—Our volunteer report is tardy, but the churches have comparatively few in attendance until the weather begins to be unfavorable at the beaches, at which time also the tourists begin to reach here, making it more favorable to await.

We received 14,000 TOWERS for distribution, only 400 of which are on hand; these remaining ones we will see are properly disposed of.

Our volunteers have manifested more love and zeal, I think, than in the past, and feel they were disappointed to find the work completed for this time. We meet more opposition than ever in the past. One minister came out the church and said he would see to it that there were laws passed which would stop this distribution of literature. When he left his church his farewell sermon was against this truth. In private, this same man said he thought he would do God a service to take the lives of such people who held such devilish doctrines.

We served about 110 churches in L—A—and about 21 churches in surrounding towns. The friends at P— served their churches alone this year.

We thank you all for your share in this work, your labor of love, and are grateful for the privilege we have in service, and trust we may receive more ammunition for future work.

Sincerely yours in Him, ROBT. NAIRN.—*California.*

DEAR BRETHREN:—I received box of tracts some time ago with joy. It gives me joy to read the report in the TOWER at the last of the year—to know of the tons of glad tidings going forth in search of wheat grains. I have filled out and mailed all the addressed wrappers you sent me for India and other foreign countries, without the loss of one. I have, by the Lord's help, mailed over forty-seven thousand tracts since March 26, 1901, including the India and foreign mail, besides about twelve thousand before that date, while I was not so deeply interested. As I am appointed by the community of this place and the Postoffice Department to hold the office of postmaster, the Lord, I think, has opened a way for me to work. I wish to use it, so long as it will be opened, for the good work, as I fear soon we will not be permitted to distribute the glad tidings. The Lord said, "Work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work." Your unworthy servant in the Lord, J. L. FREED.—*Pennsylvania.*

LIFE AND DEATH

So he died for his faith; that is fine—
More than most of us do.
But stay, can you add to that line
That he lived for it, too?

In his death he bore witness at last
As a martyr to truth;
Did his life do the same in the past,
From the days of his youth?

It is easy to die; men have died
For a wish or a whim—
From bravado or passion or pride—
Was it harder for him?

But to live—every day to live out
All the truth that he dreamt,
While his friends met his conduct with doubt,
And the world with contempt;—

Was it thus that he plodded ahead,
Never turning aside?
Then we'll talk of the life that he led—
Never mind how he died.

—*Ernest Crosby.*

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE GROANING CREATION

The greatest affliction of the world is discontent: the great prosperity of the few causes the masses to "fret," and the more so as knowledge increases. Individually and nationally the world is restless. Yet statesmen especially are fearful of war—fearful, too, that despite their desire to avoid it something may enkindle the blaze which may involve all Europe. (1) Trouble is feared in Macedonia, an eastern province of Turkey, peopled by so-called Christians who are in a state of ferment because of various oppressions. The country under the misrule of Turkey is, according to apparently reliable accounts, so infested with robbers, "brigands," that neither life nor property is safe. The Turkish tax-gatherers oppress the people. The result is discouragement, and anarchy is expected in the spring. This will call for Turkish soldiers and a general and terrible slaughter is expected.

(2) The further fear is that Russia will seize such an occasion and join in the war;—either because of the sympathy of the people of Russia for all Greek Catholics or with a desire on the part of their government to seize more territory. (3) It is generally admitted that this might lead to further strife between the great powers of Europe. This might start a flame of war which might be difficult to extinguish; for (4) Austria-Hungary is in a bad way—almost ready for civil war. (5) Italy has a grudge against Austria of 37 years' standing, which one of her chief ministers of state recently referred to publicly. (6) France still nurses her grudge against Germany and wants back Alsace and Lorraine. (7) Germany is approaching some kind of a crisis: Socialism there is growing so rapidly that all the other political parties have been compelled to unite to oppose it. The three old parties have just entered into an agreement that whichever party polled the largest vote in each district at the last election shall have the support of the others as against Socialism. This will probably keep the Socialists from getting full control until the subsequent election.—1908. Then they and the Kaiser will have a settlement.

NEWER METHODS IN WINNING SOULS

Under the above caption the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* publishes the following account of a recent discourse:—

"Dr. David F. Bradley, president of Iowa College, Grinnell, Ia., occupied the pulpit of the First Congregational church yesterday morning and evening. At the morning service Dr. Bradley spoke from John 12:32: 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself.'

"Dr. Bradley asked if Jesus expected the fulfilment of the prophecy that all men would be drawn to him, and if the present indications pointed to its fulfilment, answering both questions in the affirmative.

"The Christian powers, he said, were dominating the earth, and this was especially true of the last century. St. Louis, with the vast territory of which it was the center, a hundred years ago was in savagery, but was now dedicated to Christianity. This condition was true not only of America, but of other countries.

"Africa, the dark continent of a few years ago, was now dominated by Christian countries, and slavery in all its hideous forms was rapidly being eliminated by the onward march of the Christian religion.

"The emancipation of Egypt by the occupation of the English, and the control of India, with its 250,000,000 of people, by a monarch who is the sworn defender of the faith, were indications that all men were being drawn to Christ.

"Russia, which had reclaimed northern Asia; Japan, which had joined the family of Christian nations, and the recent opening of China to the outside world, thus bringing one-third of the population of the earth in direct contact with the progressive peoples of other nations, showed that the fulfilment of the prophecy was near at hand.

"There was a closer unity of the nations of the world now than ever before. The introduction of the railroad, the telegraph and other facilities which bring all parts of the world into closer contact with one another, had done much toward spreading the teachings of the Christian religion.

"These facilities had also caused a wider dissemination of the English language, which was essentially the language of purity. This had done much to counteract the effects of the teachings of the native languages which were corrupt and unclean. All these things had worked for the inculcation of Christian ideas.

"The conditions at home were also more favorable than ever before. There was a greater unity among the churches. They were working not only independently for the regeneration of the world, but acting in concert for the same great end.

"In conclusion, Dr. Bradley said that everything was in favor of the optimist's views of the text, and pointed to its fulfilment. The time was not far distant when all men would be drawn to Christ."

* *

"Live and learn" is an old proverb; but it will take some of us a long time to learn that soldiers, steamboats, telegraphs, railroads and other modern conveniences are the new missionaries of the cross of Christ. It will be a long time before some of us learn that civilization is merely another name for Christianization. If it is still true that there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved than the name of Jesus—through faith in his name and obedience to his Word—then some of us will be hard to convince that the millions who are receiving the blessings and conveniences of our day are thereby receiving Christ.

How blinding must be the education and title of a doctor of divinity;—"deceiving and being deceived." Others of far less opportunity can see clearly, that love of money, selfishness and discontent are devouring true religious instincts in all classes, and in all quarters. Others can see that, while benevolences are increasing and "a form of godliness" is maintained, vital piety, sanctity, consecration to God's will, as well as faith in the inspiration of the Scriptures, are waning rapidly in every direction.

If the whole world were civilized—as highly as the most civilized nations of "Christendom"—how far from the true Christian standard of saintship its millions would still be. How much need there would still be for us to pray: "Thy kingdom *come!* Thy will be *done!—on earth, even as in heaven!*"

THE OBSERVANCE OF LENT

The following is from the Pittsburgh *Post:*—

"The observance of Lent, formerly confined to the Roman Catholic, Episcopal and Lutheran churches, now extends to the religious public very generally; and for the society of fashionable gaiety quite universally it has become a period of relative asceticism.

"This extension of regard for the Lenten fast has been coincident with an actual or supposed loosening of the hold of religious doctrines on a large part of Protestantism, more especially. Whether there has been a diminution in the attendance on religious services generally during that period of declension we have no comparative statistics to enable us to determine, though it seems to have been proved that in New York at present the great majority of the population do not go to church on Sunday—something like two-thirds.

"A similar census in London shows that in 12 of the boroughs with a population exceeding two millions, only about one in five are church attendants, counting the number at both the morning and evening services, and only one-half of them at the Anglican churches. In New York, out of a total attendance of about four hundred and fifty thousand, nearly three-fourths were found in Roman Catholic churches; and of the rest of the attendance, about 30 per cent was in Episcopal and Lutheran chuches.

"It appears, therefore, that of the people of New York who pay heed to religious observances, something like four-fifths frequent the churches which hold to the celebration of the Lenten fast. But, as we have already suggested, some special regard for that season is beginning to be paid by Protestant denominations which used to look on it as a detestable relic of 'Popery.' For example, we find in the *Christian Intelligence* of the Reformed Church, an appeal by the 'National Central Committee of the Twentieth Century Gospel Campaign,' a distinctively 'Evangelical' enterprise, that Ash Wednesday be observed by the churches as a special day of humiliation and prayer, 'That the praying may not be general and indefinite, the committee suggests the following topics:—

"'1. For a return of absolute faith in the Bible, as the inspired, authoritative Word of God, and as furnishing the churches *their only credentials and message;* and for an immediate revival of earnest and systematic study of that Word in order to learn what God would have us to do in the present conditions.

"'2. For a quickened sense of the sinfulness of sin, and of man's lost and hopeless condition as a sinner in time and eternity.

"'3. For a new vision of the greatness, sufficiency and *efficacy of the atonement of Jesus Christ wrought on the cross,* and to be *universally proclaimed* as the *only hope* for lost man.

"'4. For an overwhelming sense of the obligations and responsibility on the part of every professed follower of Christ, for witnessing to the lost soul nearest him—and to all lost souls he can reach—of the dying love and saving power of Christ, and urging the immediate acceptance of *salvation by his blood.*

"'5. For an immediate entrance of all Christians upon a campaign of personal work in seeking and winning lost souls, "beginning at Jerusalem"—at home—and reaching out to the uttermost parts of the earth.

"'6. For a mighty outpouring of and enduement with, the holy spirit, that the church throughout the entire nation may, by his enlightening influence, be brought to understand these *life* and *death* truths and be guided in meeting these awful and inescapable responsibilities.'"

* * *

We read the above six topics with interest amounting to amazement. Whoever drafted that list was either "not far from the kingdom" and "an Israelite indeed," or else he was a hypocrite. We should be glad to learn that the entire committee agreed to the topics heartily and intelligently—appreciating specially the features which we have italicized. Our best wish for all the people of New York and of the whole world would be that all or at least *some* of them, may observe Lent and join in such petitions heartily: if but one in a hundred of those who will observe the Lenten season will do so, it will surely mean a great revival in their own hearts.

To us who observe the Memorial Supper on its anniversary only, the occasion is one of the greater solemnity, and may well be approached with the greater reverence. We commend to all of "this way" (Acts 9:2) that the interim between now and the Memorial (April 10th) be specially a season of prayer and fasting—drawing near to the Lord. (1 Cor. 7:5) True, the Lord's consecrated people are continually to live as separate from sin and from the mind of the flesh as possible, and are to "pray without ceasing;" but, as the Apostle intimates, there may profitably be special seasons of this kind; and surely none more appropriate than this Memorial season. The fasting which we urge may or may not affect the food and drink, according to the judgment of each, respecting what diet will best enable him to glorify God and to keep his "body under." We refer specially to abstention from all "fleshly lusts which war against the soul;" these appetites always under restraint with the saints, may well be specially *mortified* at this time.

SOCIALISTS THANK MORGAN FOR AID

The following we clip from the *North American,* a thoroughly reliable journal:—

"The State committee of the Socialist party of Pennsylvania has instructed its secretary to send a letter to J. Pierpont Morgan to thank him, as the representative of the trusts, for the aid which monopolies are giving to the Socialist movement in the United States.

"According to the letter, Mr. Morgan does not know anything about Socialism, and does not see what propaganda work he is doing in furtherance of the co-operative commonwealth—the Socialist ideal.

"The great trust-maker is frankly told that he cannot help his actions as a Socialist agitator, being moved thereto by certain inevitable laws of economic development over which he has no control. The letter says the trusts have demonstrated the wastefulness of competition and the practicability of combination on a large scale. While the Socialists say they press forward toward that goal where the nation will own the trusts, they are careful to say that they are not adverse to taking remedial measures, en route, such as shorter hours, more wages, factory regulations, etc.

"Following is the letter in full:—

"'To J. Pierpont Morgan, New York City.

"'Dear Sir:—As a preface to this letter and as an excuse for the liberty we take in addressing you, we desire to say that we consider you one of the most notable characters the world has seen. At the same time we cannot forbear adding that we are of the opinion that you are an unconscious tool in the hands of natural forces, a chief factor in certain social and

economic tendencies, whereof you know not the meaning and of which you cannot see the end. You are the leader of the great modern so-called trust movement, which is doing more to prepare civilized countries for the advent of Socialism than all the feeble efforts of us working-men. We know, or at least have good grounds for supposing, that you honestly dislike Socialists without exactly knowing why. We cannot blame you for this, because you unwittingly manifest the feeling of your class. As your friend, Emperor William, frankly said, you know nothing about Socialism—"the great question of the day"—but then a man in your position does not, in the nature of things, have time to study social science.

"'Political economy, as taught in all the schools today is an anachronism, holding that competition is the best means of advancing the welfare of society; whereas the successful operation of the trust has demonstrated at once the practicability of co-operation and the impossibility of a continuance of competition. The Socialists have maintained this for the last fifty years, in proof of which we refer you to the predictions of Karl Marx in *Das Kapital.*

"'For years the recognized intellectual class has told us that production on a national or world-wide scale was impossible; that one man or group of men could not conduct such vast enterprises; that they would break down of their own weight—in short, that they were an ephemeral phase of economic development. We could not convince the intellectuals to the contrary; but the stern logic of events has proved the correctness of our position. The trust convinces the most obtuse.

"'Our position, in brief, is as follows:—

"'In the United States, as in all other civilized countries, the natural order of economic development has separated society into two antagonistic classes—the capitalistic, a comparatively small class, the possessors of all the means of production and distribution (land, mines, machinery and the means of transportation and communication), and the larger and ever-increasing class of wage-workers who possess no property at all. This economic supremacy has secured to the dominant class the full control of the government, the pulpit, the schools and the subsidized press. It has thus made the capitalist class the arbiter of the fate of the workers, whom it is reducing to a condition of dependence, economically exploited and oppressed, intellectually and physically crippled and degraded. Under these conditions their political equality is a bitter mockery. The present government is a conspiracy of organized and incorporated wealth, hiding behind and secretly manipulating the political machine.

"'The contest between these two classes grows ever sharper. Hand-in-hand with the growth of monopolies goes the annihilation of small industries and of the middle class depending on them. Ever larger grows the multitude of destitute wage-workers and of the unemployed, and ever fiercer the struggle between the class of the exploiter and the exploited.

"'Socialists demand that this struggle shall cease, but it will cease only with the elimination of its causes. To eliminate these causes it is necessary to abolish the private ownership of the modern tool of production—the trust—and place its ownership in the hands of the people. To accomplish this, it is necessary to arouse the wealth producers to a recognition of their class interest and weld them into a compact political force. This Socialists are doing, and the development of the trust constantly accelerates the movement.

"'Our ultimate goal is the co-operative commonwealth, but in striving for it we do not hesitate to seize any opportunity to improve the condition of the working class, such as securing a shorter workday, increased wages, child labor laws, factory regulations, employers' liability acts, etc.

"'The Socialist vote in the United States now numbers one-third of a million; in industrial Pennsylvania, 28,000; in intellectual Massachusetts, 40,000. These few facts, Mr. Morgan, constrain us to acknowledge our indebtedness to you and your class for demonstrating the practicability and inevitability of Socialism.

"'Yours truly, FRED LONG, Secretary.

"'By direction of the State committee.'"

RECENT ALLEGHENY "CHART-TALKS"

Replying to many letters of inquiry, we report to all friends of the cause that the six meetings held here recently in Carnegie Music Hall—instead of in our usual chapel—to afford opportunity for the public—were quite successful, so far as human judgment can determine. The attendance was good; at the first meeting at least 600 and at the others 800 or over, each. The audiences were not aristocratic, but very intelligent, and almost exclusively of the middle aged and elderly. The closest of attention was given, although the discourses were three or four times as long as many of the auditors were accustomed to.

We cannot doubt that some prejudices and misconceptions were removed; and we certainly trust that some were led to clearer views of our gracious heavenly Father and his plans for man's salvation. Let us hope also that some who heard will be drawn by the cords of love nearer to the Lord. We can only do our best and leave all results with the Lord. It is his work specially, and ours only as his mouthpieces and representatives. The speaker and all of the Allegheny church were surely blessed in the efforts put forth to reach with the truth "brethren" still in "Babylon."

CHANGES IN THE EUROPEAN ITINERARY

We are advised by our Swiss brethren that arrangements have been made for a General Convention of German and Swiss friends, to be held at Zurich, Switzerland, May 31 and June 1, at which a large number of friends is expected. We, therefore, change the date of the Editor's visit in that vicinity to conform with this arrangement, and announce that he will be at Zurich May 31 and June 1, instead of May 23 and 24.

In view of increasing interest in Ireland, we have decided to include that country in the visit, and, if the hoped-for arrangements for public meetings are made, they will be as follows:—

Dublin	May 21, 22.
Belfast	May 24.

In all these places he will be very pleased to greet the interested, and trusts that as far as practicable, these will make themselves known to him.

BROTHER HENNINGES GOES ABROAD

Believing that the general interests of the work hoped to be accomplished through the Editor's visit abroad will be thereby advanced, it has been decided that Brother E. C. Henninges shall go, too. Indeed, he goes before—hoping to assist in making arrangements for the meetings and in gathering information necessary to the determining of the further course of operations in various parts of Europe. He is sure of a cordial welcome, and looks forward with pleasure to meeting the friends of present truth in London on April 5th, and also on the Memorial occasion, April 10th, and to accompanying the Editor, as above.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELDERSHIP

ACTS 20:28-38.—APRIL 5.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."

The Apostle Paul, on leaving Ephesus after the rioting there, determined to visit Jerusalem again, but first would visit the European churches—of Macedonia and Greece. It was while in Macedonia that he is supposed to have written his second letter to the Corinthians; and, on this tour, while in Corinth for about three months, he is supposed to have written his epistle to the Romans. At this time Nero, aged 21, was Emperor of Rome, and the Apostle Paul was about 56 years of age—in the full prime of his Christian life and experience.

Our lesson finds the Apostle en route to Jerusalem, on a trading vessel which was detained at the port of Miletus, about thirty miles distant from Ephesus. The number of days the vessel would be detained, changing cargo, etc., was uncertain; hence, the Apostle, instead of going to Ephesus, sent word to the elders of the church there that they might come to him at Miletus—that thus he might have as long as possible with them, without missing his vessel when it would be ready to start. The elders came, and our lesson records the Apostle's address to them. They may have stayed several days in his company, and probably he said much more, but the final words evidently, in the mind of Luke, who chronicled them, were an epitome of the entire address, which is generally esteemed as both eloquent and touching. It is an address from a general overseer to local overseers, and to be appreciated must be viewed from this standpoint.

"Take heed unto yourselves:" well did the Apostle realize that those who do not keep guard over their own hearts can not faithfully serve the interests of the church in general. Piety, as well as charity, should begin at home. Along this line John Calvin said, "No one can successfully care for the salvation of others who neglects his own, since he himself is a part of the flock." This thought is brought out by the

Apostle, also, saying, "And [take heed] to all the flock, over the which the holy Spirit hath made you overseers"—more properly, "In the which," as in the Revised Version; for the overseers are not to be considered lords *over* the flock, but members in it who have a responsibility respecting fellow-members. The care of the overseer should not be confined to the well-favored members of the flock, financially, socially, educationally or otherwise; but as the Apostle declares, should be general "to *all* the flock"—including the poorest as well as the most uncouth naturally.

The elders were not necessarily aged men, according to the flesh; for in the church of Christ the flesh is reckoned as dead;—their age, their maturity, their eldership, is as new creatures. Although the chosen representatives of the church, they were to esteem their responsibility as coming from on high;—however earthly influences had been associated with their appointment, their obligation was really as representatives of the Lord, through his holy spirit. The word "Elders" here is the same as Presbytery in 1 Tim. 4:14; and the word "overseers" is the same elsewhere in the Scriptures rendered "bishop," signifying one charged with a duty respecting others. We thus see that this word bishop, or overseer, has in modern times been divested of its original simplicity. The elders of the church of Christ are its overseers, and should realize the responsibility of the position they have accepted. The Apostle Paul was an overseer in a general sense; as he himself expresses it, he had "the care of all the churches"—particularly of all those which, in the Lord's providence, he had been the means of establishing in the truth, or who accepted his ministry, either in person or by letter. While the holy spirit has the supervision of such matters, it, nevertheless, remains for the congregation of the Lord's people to note the leadings of the spirit in the appointment of overseers, and to accept such, and only such, and so much overseeing and supervision as they believe to be of the Lord's providence.

Mr. Thompson-Seton, the renowned student of wild animals, relates in his work, "*Lives of the Hunted*," that "the leaders of the flock gain and hold their position as leaders, not from any authority over the flock, but from the fact that they have shown themselves wisest in finding the best pastures and the most successful in guarding against enemies,—the flock having learned to trust them." This furnishes a good illustration of what the attitude of the Lord's people should be toward those whom they accept as superintendents, overseers, elders,—according to the Scriptures. But alas! we find in the church nominal many leaders who seem to be nearly devoid of the proper qualities of leadership here referred to by the Apostle: (1) to oversee, or look out for, the interests of the flock in general; and (2) to feed them. It should be observed that the position of a bishop gives no *authority* over the church, except that which properly comes from great piety, wisdom and experience. The flock is to be guarded against errors of doctrine, and from false teachers, and to be guided into the richest pastures of the Word of God, and into the brightest Christian experiences, and into the fields of greatest usefulness.

A prominent writer on this subject says:—

"Mr. Ruskin, in his *Sesame and Lilies*, commenting on the strange phrase, 'blind mouths,' in Milton's *Lycidas*, says: 'Those two monosyllables express the precisely accurate contraries of right character in the two great offices of the church—those of bishop and pastor. A bishop means a person who sees; a pastor means one who feeds; the most unbishoply character a man can have is, therefore, to be blind; the most unpastoral is, instead of feeding, to want to be fed. Nearly all the evils of the church have arisen from bishops desiring *power* more than *light*. They want authority, not outlooking. It is the king's (Christ is our King) office to rule: the bishop's office is to *oversee* the flock, to number it sheep by sheep; to be ready always to give full account of it.'"

The Apostle states the grounds for so earnest an exhortation: (1) The church which they were overseeing and feeding was to be recognized as God's church, "purchased with the blood of his own [Son]."* That which God so highly valued, and purchased at so great a price, is to be esteemed very precious by all who would be his servants and its servants. (2) Because dangers and foes would arise; and while these could not come without divine permission, it is a part of the divine will that they shall serve as tests of faith and loyalty of the entire flock, including the elders, overseers, pastors. The energy necessary to such resistance of evil would tend to develop character which God desires each member of his flock to have. God would not suffer them to be tempted above that they were able, but would with every temptation, or trial, provide a way of escape; but he would have them learn to trust him, to exercise faith and obedience and vigilance and resistance of evil.

The Apostle evidently knew by inspiration of some kind that he would never see these dear brethren again—that his mission in this field was at a close, and as a true under-shepherd he was looking out for the interests of the flock. He knew, probably from the prophecy of Daniel, that a great falling away was to come;—that the adversary was to be permitted to develop a great anti-Christ system,—as he subsequently wrote to the church at Thessalonica; and he wished the local overseers to realize the responsibility of their position, and to be vigilant. "Grievous wolves shall enter in amongst you, not sparing the flock;"—ambitious for power, influence, etc., they would not hesitate to barter the interests of the flock for their own advancement. Another source of danger would be from within—"of your own selves" some would rise up—be puffed up with ambition, to have followers, adherents, and would lead them into false doctrines, to the injury of themselves and those misled by them.

The knowledge of these things was to keep them on guard continually, not only as against wolves from without, but against the rising of ambitious ones amongst their own number—not necessarily watching each other merely, but rather each specially watching and guarding his own heart against the insidious attacks of the adversary along the lines indicated,—too great self-esteem or desire to be great. The Apostle, we may be sure, was glad to be able to point to his own course in their midst, as an example of proper humility of spirit, and of zeal for the interests of the flock. "Remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn [admonish] everyone day and night with tears." The secret of the Apostle's zeal lay, evidently, in his appreciation of the fact that he was God's ambassador, and that the work of the Lord in which he was privileged to be a coworker, is a most important one—relating first to the salvation and perfecting of the saints, the elect, and ultimately through them to the blessing of all the families of the earth. Had the Apostle, during those three years, been neglecting the spiritual interests of the flock, he could not have made such an address as this to the elders. It would not have done to have said: Ye remember how many entertainments of a frivolous character I attended with you and helped to arrange; the oyster suppers and peach-and-cream festivals; the private theatricals, charades and tableaux, and general fun and money-making schemes which we entered into. The Apostle's appreciation of the fact that he was an ambassador for the King of kings, was ever present with him and lent a force and earnestness to his entreaties on behalf of righteousness and spirituality, which, with his tears, were much better backing than frivolities of any kind.

Turning from the darker picture of coming trials and difficulties, the Apostle commended the brethren to the Lord, who loved his church so as to purchase it, who watches over its interests, so that the Adversary cannot harm those who faithfully follow the Captain of their salvation,—assuring them that this grace of God might be expected to come to them through his Word. The Apostle had nothing to say against colleges and seminaries and worldly sciences of themselves; but when he would mention the power that is to keep the Lord's people against the wiles of the adversary it was not to these that he pointed his colaborers, but to the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God. We of the present time may well lay this testimony to heart; for today we see foes assaulting the Lord's flock on every hand; wolves who, in the name of science would not spare the flock, but dash to pieces the faith, the hope, the trust, of the Lord's people, giving them nothing substantial in return; "higher critics" vaunting themselves upon their superior learning and their ability to distinguish between inspiration and non-inspiration, and who offer to select for the sheep an occasional blade of grass from the Word of God, which, however, they assure the sheep, requires much scholastic learning to make nutritive.

Today, also, we see in every direction this same tendency on the part of some amongst ourselves to arise and to seek to draw away disciples after them; and we need to remember that the defense of the sheep is not to be found in worldly wisdom, but in the power of God, as represented in the Word and plan of God. As the Apostle said to these elders of Ephesus, so we may hear him say to us, that the Word of God is able to build us up substantially, to make us "strong

* This is not to be understood as conflicting with other Scriptural statements to the effect that our Lord Jesus "bought us with his own precious blood." Both thoughts are correct: though they view the subject from two different standpoints. From the larger standpoint, God is the originator of the entire plan of salvation—from start to finish he is thus the Savior. But he accomplishes the salvation through the Son. He laid help [for us] upon one who was mighty to save—fully qualified. (Isa 43:11; 1 Tim. 2:5; 4:10; Psa. 89:19) Thus every feature of our salvation is *of* the Father, though *by* the Son, as the Apostle clearly points out—1 Cor. 8:6.

in the Lord and in the power of his might," and to give us eventually "an inheritance amongst all them which are sanctified."

It is worthy of note here that all the inheritances and eternal rewards held before the Lord's people in the Scriptures are to the "*sanctified*"—none of them are promised to any other class. One of the Society's colporteurs recently wrote us that when about to deliver a volume of the DAWN series to a person who had subscribed, the lady made objection, and declined to take the book, saying that she understood it denied that the Scriptures taught a hell of eternal torture; and that she was sure to the contrary, and that if there is no such place there ought to be. The colporteur replied by inquiring who she believed would be saved, and she answered, "The holy, the sanctified," the ones mentioned by the Apostle in this lesson. The colporteur asked the lady if she claimed to be one of the consecrated saints of God. She answered, "No." He then replied, "You are expecting then, to spend eternity in torment?"

The lady saw at once the force of the erroneous argument, and said she would take the book, concluding that if all were to go to eternal torment who were not of the *sanctified* class the outlook for the future would be horrible, for almost the entire race. What a relief we find in the clearer knowledge of the divine plan, which shows us that the inheritance of the sanctified is to be the kingdom, at the second advent of our Lord: and that the kingdom then to be established is to be the divine agency for blessing the world of mankind with a clear knowledge of God, and a full opportunity to accept his grace and mercy and blessing unto *sanctification* and everlasting life through our Lord Jesus.

Having commended them to the Word of God, the Apostle draws attention to his own mode of life, while with them, as a proper illustration of the effect of the Gospel in a sanctified heart—as a *proper example of an overseer and elder* in the church, which they should seek to copy. He could speak of these things now, to these fellow-elders, in a manner that he probably would have hesitated to speak of them to the church at Ephesus while still ministering to them, as, by some, it might have been considered boasting. He would have these brother-elders and overseers note that in his ministering to the church at Ephesus he had not coveted their silver or gold or apparel, but instead had labored with his own hands, and had thus in all things *set before them an example of how they also* as elders (presbyters) and overseers (bishops, *episcopos*) ought to help the weak and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

The Apostle could point thus to himself as an example of a proper servant of the church, because he had so closely followed the example of the great head, Jesus. It is blessed to receive, but still more blessed to give. God himself is the great Giver, continually bestowing favors upon us, and not upon the good only, but also upon the evil—even providing a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. These words of our Lord ("It is more blessed to give than to receive") are not recorded in any of the Gospels. Dr. Philip Schaff tells us that "outside the inspired memories of the Gospels we possess the record of some twenty sayings of Jesus which have floated down to us." This quotation by the Apostle Paul is one of these, of whose authenticity we can have no doubt; and surely it is in full accord with our dear Redeemer's conduct. He emulated the Father in that he continually gave, gave, gave to others. He did not selfishly see how much comfort and ease and honor he could secure for himself, but made himself of no reputation, for our sakes, daily giving his life for the assistance of others in matters temporal, as well as spiritual, until finally he completed the sacrifice at Calvary, having given on our behalf all that he had.

If all the elders of the church of Christ could thoroughly take to heart these noble examples of Jesus and of Paul, and could become so thoroughly enthused with the Gospel message and with the privilege of being coworkers with God that they would entirely forget themselves, it would be a great blessing for them, as well as for the various little companies of the Lord's people over whom, in the Lord's providence, the holy spirit has made them overseers, to watch out for the interests of the flock and to feed them. We are not meaning to say that there are no earnest brethren today. Quite to the contrary. But we do mean to say that it is well for us to lay to heart the Apostle's earnest exhortation, that we all may be more and more faithful, more and more copies of God's dear Son, more and more like the great Apostle as regards self-sacrificing devotion to the interests of Zion.

At the close of the conference, when we may suppose the sailing of the vessel was announced, the Apostle knelt with the brethren from Ephesus, in prayer, the tenor of which may well be imagined. Then the parting took place, and doubtless the dear brethren began to realize more fully than they had ever done before what great blessings God had bestowed upon them through the Apostle's ministries, and the thought that they should never see him again filled them with sadness, and they wept as they accompanied him to the ship.

Doubtless the Apostle consoled them with the reflection that the time of partings would soon be over and the blessed eternity of union and fellowship soon begin, when they would meet not only one another, but above all meet the Redeemer himself and all the faithful in Christ Jesus. So our Lord also expressed himself on this matter, "a little while." The eighteen centuries intervening would have seemed a long while had any lived from then till now,—but since their "sleep" would be an unconscious interval, it was well that God kindly veiled their eyes and merely comforted them from his own larger standpoint of "soon," "quickly," "a little while." But now that the kingdom is nigh, even at the door, our hearts no longer cry, How long, O Lord? but, Hallelujah! the day star is risen—the morning is here!

"YOUR LABOR IS NOT IN VAIN"

1 COR. 15:20, 21, 50-58.—APRIL 12.

"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept."

Very appropriate to its date, this is a lesson on the resurrection. There are few features of truth on which Christian people in general seem to have greater need for Bible study than that of the resurrection. There are many systems of religion in the world, but none but Christianity teaches a resurrection of the *dead*. We mean true Christianity—the Bible teaching; for alas! with deep regret we write it, churchianity does not believe in the resurrection of the *dead:* it has adopted the heathen theory that the dead are not dead, but alive; hence, whatever resurrection it teaches is along that line—of a resurrection of the *living*. Its claim is that at death something leaves the body (although they have not the slightest evidence of such departure, except that breath and vitality leave it); they claim that dying is a release, a benefit, an advantage; an unprisoning of the one who appeared to die, but who, they claim, is really more alive than ever. However, finding the doctrine of resurrection in the Bible, they do not wish to ignore it entirely and, hence teach that its beneficiaries, whom we will call "*shades*" or "*ghosts*" have hankerings after their bodies—which continue persistently after centuries of experience without bodies—although they perhaps had only a few years' experience in bodies. This hankering for a body (which they claim is unnecessary to existence and happiness) God proposes to gratify, and by and by the resurrection of the bodies will take place. They anticipate a grand, glorious time in getting back into bodies which they describe much after the manner of present bodies, which they say are "prison-houses." Surely there is inconsistency enough in such a theory to nauseate almost anybody, and it is not surprising that great confusion prevails throughout Christendom on this subject which, as we shall see in examining our present lesson, finds so prominent a place in the Scriptures.

The Scripture teaching is most explicitly to the contrary of the above, but seems obscure, because of certain doctrinal errors which the great Adversary has introduced. One of these is a confusion of thought respecting what constitutes a soul. Churchianity's view of a soul was expressed by a Methodist bishop in these words: "It is without interior or exterior; without body, shape or parts—and you could put a million of them in a nutshell." The bishop's definition of a soul would be a proper definition of *nothing*, and one could just as readily put ten thousand millions of nothings in a nutshell,—and have room left. In the Bible, the word "soul" is used to signify being, or person; and a human being, or human person, is made up of two parts; viz., a body and its vitality otherwise called the spirit of life, or breath of life. The body is not intelligent of itself, neither is vitality intelligent; but when the two are brought together, intelligence, being, or soul, commences. So it was with Father Adam: the Lord formed his body, but it was not a soul,—it was merely so much organized matter in good form. Next God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives"—the vital

ity common to all living creatures, but not a soul. It was when these two things, *organism* and *vitality*, were properly united that man came into existence, a living, thinking being —"*man* became,—a living soul." (Gen. 2:7) We must notice carefully that the lesson is not that man *has* a soul, but that man *is* a soul, or being.

Let us take an illustration from nature—the air we breathe: it is composed of oxygen and nitrogen, neither of which is atmosphere, or air; but when the two combine, as they do in proper chemical proportions, the resulting thing is atmosphere. Just so with the soul. God speaks to us from this standpoint, of our being each a soul. He does not address our bodies nor our breath of lives, but he does address *us* as intelligent beings, or souls. In pronouncing the penalty of violating his law, he did not address Adam's body specifically, but the man, the soul, the intelligent being: "Thou!" "In the day that *thou* eatest thereof *thou* shalt surely *die*." "The *soul* that sinneth it shall *die*."—Gen. 2:17; Ezek. 18:20.

When we perceive, then, that it is the soul that dies, we perceive also that it is the soul that will need the resurrection from death. Death is the dissolution of the union between organism and vitality, whether it be in man or in beast, in fish or in fowl. Scientists agree that a general repair of the tissues of our bodies is continually in progress; some elements constantly sloughing off, and new ones as constantly being added; they assert that this process renews the body every seven years. If, therefore, God had pronounced the death sentence merely against Adam's *body*, it would have been paid within seven years. But the penalty was not against Adam's body, but against Adam himself, the soul, the *ego*, the being, and hence, the sloughing off of the atoms of his body did not pay the penalty. It required the sacrifice of another *soul* to redeem him. Hence, we read that our Lord Jesus made "his *soul* [being] an offering for sin;" that he "poured out his *soul* unto death."—Isa. 53:10, 12.

The Apostle Peter points out that the soul of our Lord Jesus was not left in death—in *hades*—and he quotes from the Prophet David in corroboration. David declares, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in *sheol* [Greek, *hades*—the death-state]." The Apostle explains that David was a prophet, and spoke, not of himself, but of the Lord Jesus, that "his *soul* was not left in *hades*." (Acts 2:25-32) This constituted the Apostle Peter's argument regarding the resurrection of our Lord—that his *soul* was not left in *hades*—in the death-state; that God raised him up by his own power. And this is the proper thought respecting all death and all resurrection from death. It is the *soul* that dies—the being is dissolved by death. Then the body, subject to corruption, returns to dust. If it was our Lord's soul that died and was raised, and if he gave himself a ransom, a corresponding price, for soul-Adam (and his race in his loins at the time of his transgression) the thought now must be that all the souls of Adam's race are to be recovered from that death penalty;—and that the resurrection is for the purpose of restoring these souls of Adam's race, who have been bought back from destruction by the soul of the Redeemer.

Let us now look at the words of our lesson, and see that they are in full accord with what we have here set forth to be the Scriptural teaching. Vs. 20 mentions the dead as asleep, and declares that Christ was the first one to experience a resurrection from death. Let us note these two points: (1) In what sense is death a sleep? We answer that really, actually, death is an extinction of the soul; but that God, having purposed our redemption from before the foundation of the world, purposed also, as a result of that redemption, the calling of us back to being again in his own due time, by a resurrection of the dead: as it is written, "Thou *redeemest* my *life* from *destruction*." (Psa. 103:4; 34:22) In view of this the Lord speaks of death as a sleep, and his people are similarly justified in using this term "sleep." Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the prophets, and the kings, good and bad, are all declared to have "fallen *asleep*," "*slept* with their fathers," etc.

The New Testament records our Lord's words respecting the maid whom he called back from death: he said of her, "The maid is not dead, but *sleepeth*." So of Lazarus he declared, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," and when his disciples understood not the meaning of his words "then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead." The plain statement is death; the proper figure of death, in view of the divine purposes and promises, permits it to be called by the more comforting term, *sleep*, which expresses at the same time both our hope for the dead and our faith in God. The record of Stephen's death is that "he fell on sleep;" and the apostles, in writing to the church regarding, not only the brethren of the household of faith, but all their dear friends who go into death, speaks of them as "them that sleep in *Jesus*," while of the church he declares that they are "dead in *Christ*." Only the members of the "body" can be said to be *in* Christ, or to have any hope of sharing with him in *his* resurrection. (Phil. 3:10) But, it was "the man Christ *Jesus*, who by the grace of God tasted death for *every man*," and thus, in harmony with the divine plan, turned what would have been death for every man, into a sleep from which all will awaken at Christ's second advent,—after he shall have established his kingdom. Respecting this awakening, and the place from which the dead will come forth, he says, "All that are in the grave shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth."—John 5:28.

(2) This statement that our Lord was the first-fruits of them that slept is in general accord with the testimony of the Word, "that he should be the *first* that should rise from the dead;" and also that he should be the "first-born [from the dead] among many brethren." (Acts 26:23; Rom. 8:29) Our Lord, as the head of the Church which is his body, was raised from the dead by the Father's power, on the third day after his crucifixion; but the body, the church, will not be raised up until the time of its completion, in the end of the Gospel age. When raised up it will, as his "brethren," or the members of "his body," share in "his resurrection"—his kind of a resurrection—a chief, or superior resurrection; not a resurrection in flesh and as human beings, but, as we shall see shortly, to a spirit nature, with a spirit body. Our Lord was not only the firstfruits from the dead amongst the brethren, the church, but the first to arise from the dead in every sense of the word, none having preceded him.

What, then, becomes of the theory that the dead are not dead, or that their resurrection to a higher life took place at the moment of their dying? We answer that these theories have no foundation whatever in Scripture. They are the vaporings of those who have learned in the school of Plato science falsely so-called, and who have not on this subject, at least, been taught of God in the school of Christ. Mark the words of the Apostle Paul on this subject. He did not claim that our Lord arose from the dead the next instant after he expired on the cross, but plainly declared that he "rose from the dead *on the third day*." Incidentally, too, Peter refers to the prophet David, and while speaking of him in most respectful terms, as a prophet of the Lord, he declares, "David is not ascended into the heavens."—1 Cor. 15:4; Acts 2:34.

The Apostle balances this question of *life* and *death* in the 21st verse, declaring that death passed upon all by a man's transgression, and that the resurrection provision is for all, through the obedience of the man Christ Jesus,—who "poured out his *soul* unto death" on behalf of our race. There could have been no resurrection without this redemptive work, the substitution of our Lord's *soul* for the *soul* of Adam. It was a man who had sinned; and only the life of a man could meet the penalty prescribed; hence, as the Apostle says, the blood [death] of bulls and of goats could never take away sin (Heb. 10:4); and we might add that likewise the death of angels or archangels could never take away sin,—because of this divine arrangement of a life for a life, a man for a man. (Exod. 21:23-5; Lev. 24:12, 17-22; Deut. 19:21; Matt. 5:38) Hence the necessity that our Lord should leave the glory of his spirit condition, which he had with the Father, should humble himself, and take a lower nature,—the human,—in order that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man. He gave his soul, his being, all that he had as the *man* Christ Jesus—he kept nothing back—the price has been paid fully and satisfactorily.* The evidences of its satisfaction to God is doubly attested, (*a*) by the fact that he raised our Lord Jesus from the dead—giving him a new life,—life on a new plane of being, far above angels, and principalities and powers. (Eph. 1:20, 21) (*b*) It is also attested by the giving of the holy spirit at Pentecost, after our Lord had ascended up on high and had presented the merit of his sacrifice on our behalf.

Having thus established the general principle of a resurrection, and its applicability to all mankind, because the redemption was "a ransom for *all*" (1 Tim. 2:6), the Apostle proceeds to discuss particularly the first resurrection, in which the church is specially interested (he was not addressing his words to the world, but to the "sanctified in Christ Jesus."—1 Cor. 1:2) His words, found in vss. 42-44, describe, as clearly as it is possible for us to understand things so far beyond our plane of existence, the grandeurs and perfections of being which shall be ours when we shall have experienced this great change of the first resurrection: we shall no longer be weak and imperfect, with dying tendencies and with animal bodies; but shall be incorruptible, powerful, and have spiritual bodies. "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." (1

* See issue of May 1, 1916, page 133.

John 3:2) We will not discuss these verses particularly here, as they are not made a part of this lesson, and as we have treated them at length previously.

When, in the 50th verse, the Apostle declares that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, we are not to delude ourselves, as some dear Aventist friends are inclined to do,—by saying that "flesh and blood" cannot inherit the kingdom of God, but flesh and bones can. We are to recognize that the Apostle, in the use of these words, "flesh and blood," signifies *human nature*, as when our Lord Jesus, for instance, said to Peter, "*Flesh* and *blood* [humanity] hath not revealed it unto thee." The Apostle's declaration thus properly understood, is that *human* nature cannot inherit the kingdom of God. This is in full accord with his own statements and the statements of other apostles, to the effect that we must become "new creatures in Christ"—"partakers of the *divine* nature," if we would be sharers with our Lord in the coming kingdom, and its great and glorious work. Our Lord's words to Nicodemus are in full accord with this, when he declared, "Except a man be born again [begotten now to a new nature, and born in the resurrection] he cannot enter the kingdom of God," and cannot even see it. (John 3:3) Earthly beings of human nature, flesh and blood, can see earthly beings, but as "no *man* hath seen God at any time," likewise no *man* can see the glorified Son of God; and for similar reasons none will be able with the natural eye to see the glorified church—for all these in their resurrection change will be spirit beings, and like their Lord, "the express image of the Father's person," We must keep in memory the fact that the church is entirely separate and distinct from the world; and that the hopes of the church are to be differentiated from those of the world in every particular.

"Neither doth corruption inherit incorruption;" this word "incorruption" (*aphtharsia*) is the same that is rendered "immortality" in Rom. 2:7, and in 2 Tim. 1:10. It is rendered incorruption in verses 42, 53, 54 of this chapter. The thought is that our flesh is subject to decay; but that the new body which all who participate in the first resurrection shall receive, will be an incorruptible one—one that cannot decay, that cannot die. This incorruptibility, or immortality, to be attained in their resurrection by the faithful of the Lord's disciples of this Gospel age, is to be applicable to all who will have a share in the kingdom; and now the Apostle notices what might be a difficulty in the minds of his readers. He imagines them asking the question, How will it be with those who will be alive and remain at the time of the second coming of the Lord and the setting up of his kingdom, and the awakening of these sleeping brethren to immortality? Will the living ones pass over into the kingdom with flesh and blood and inferior bodies?

The Apostle undertakes to clear up this mystery; but although he handles his subject with lucidity the matter is not clear to the majority of the Lord's people. We may presume that the Lord intended it to remain more or less of a "mystery" until now, in the due time for its fulfilment, it should be understood. The Apostle's plain declaration is that "we shall not all *sleep*," but this is misunderstood by many to mean, "We shall not all *die*." There is a vast difference between dying and sleeping. We die in a moment, in an instant; it is the period of unconsciousness that is styled sleep, and the Apostle's declaration, therefore, is that we shall not all pass through a period of unconsciousness, "but we shall all be changed." It will be as impossible for the human nature, flesh and blood, of those living at the close of the Gospel age, to participate in the spiritual kingdom which Christ will then establish, as it was impossible for any of the brethren of the past to do so. How, then, will these get rid of their flesh and blood, their human nature? We answer, that the Scriptural declaration is most explicit, that all who will be partakers with Christ in "*his resurrection*," must be sharers with him in "*his death*." As he himself expressed it, "Be thou faithful unto *death*, and I will give thee a crown of life." It was not sufficient that our Lord should merely consecrate himself, nor that he should merely sacrifice portions of his time and energy in the service of the truth;—it was necessary that he should complete the matter of sacrifice in literal death. And so it must be with every member of his body; as it is written, prophetically of the church, "I have said, Ye are gods, all of you children of the most High; but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes"—not like Prince Adam, a convict, but like Prince Jesus, in sacrifice—filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.—Psa. 82:6, 7; Col. 1:24.

The change from corruptible to incorruptible, from mortal to immortal, from weakness to power, from ignominy to glory, from human nature to divine nature, in the case of these last members, will be so sudden as to occupy no appreciable space of time. and to be illustrated only by the twinkling of an eye;—the instant of their dying will be followed the next instant by their "change."

The thought of some, that resurrection "change" has come to each individual at the moment of dying throughout the Gospel age—that resurrection has all along followed the dying of all, is abundantly contradicted again, when the Apostle definitely fixes the time of the first resurrection of the church, the body of Christ, to be "at the last trump"—when the seventh trumpet shall sound—then "the dead [in Christ,—his members] shall be raised incorruptible, and we [of them then living] shall be changed; for this corruptible *must* put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality"—there can be no doubt that the present bodies would be wholly out of place in, and unpermissible,—impossible, to the kingdom.

After this change of the church has been completed—after this first [or chief] resurrection has been accomplished—"*Then* shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Here again the Apostle's statement is generally misunderstood: most readers get the impression that he means that the victory over death and the grave is already accomplished; and a few nearer the truth infer that the "victory" will be fully accomplished in the "change" of the church, the body of Christ, in the first resurrection. However, neither of these views meets the scope of the statement. On the contrary, the first resurrection, the "change" of the church, will be but the *beginning* of the great victory which Christ is to achieve over death and the grave. This will be merely the bringing forth of the "first-fruits," as the Apostle declares: "A kind of *firstfruits* unto God of his creatures." (James 1:18) This is the force of the Apostle's expression, "*Then* shall be brought to pass;"—that is to say, *then* this prophecy of victory over death will begin to have its fulfilment. It will require all of the Millennium to accomplish the victory over death; and Christ and the glorified church will be the victors, as it is written (vss. 25, 26). "He must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet; the *last* enemy that shall be destroyed is death." To accomplish this complete victory over death and the grave will be the very object of the establishment of the kingdom, and will require a thousand years; as it is written again, respecting the reign of those who have part in the first resurrection, "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."—Rev. 20:4.

This first resurrection glorifies the kingdom class; and forthwith the kingdom will be set up—"The mountain [kingdom] of the Lord's house" will be established in the earth. This agrees with the statement of the prophet, from which the Apostle quotes, "In this mountain [Millennial kingdom] shall the Lord of hosts make unto the people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined; and he will *destroy in this mountain* [kingdom] the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his people he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it." (Isa. 2:2; 25:6-8) How much of the beauty and fulness of the divine Word has been hidden from our eyes by reason of the errors introduced into the creeds of Christendom by the great adversary for this very purpose!

The Apostle, glancing down to the grand culmination at the close of the Millennium, exclaims with poetic fervor (vs. 55), "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The thought is: Death has been stinging our race, blighting it for six thousand years, and sending it ignominiously to the tomb; but God, who justly condemned us as a race, has looked down in compassion, and beheld our impotence, and has provided a Savior and a great one—Jesus, the head, his only begotten One, our Redeemer, and the church, his body, whose kingdom shall destroy, at one and the same time, death and the grave, and their power over all who will obey the requirements of the kingdom—completely delivering such from their power. Adamic death is to be utterly destroyed—not a soul of Adam's posterity is to be left therein,—for those who will not accept the grace of God when offered to them will be destroyed utterly, not for Adam's transgression, but for their own transgression,—not, therefore, by Adamic death, but by second death.—Ezek. 18:2-4, 20.

This utter destruction on account of personal, wilful sin is Scripturally known as the second death, which is nowhere denominated an enemy. On the contrary, it is the friend of God,—his servant, to "destroy those who [would] corrupt the earth." It is the friend of all who love righteousness, and desire peace, joy, blessing, in harmony with the divine will. It is not even the enemy of those whom it will destroy—the wicked—because it is better that they should be destroyed

than that they should be permitted to institute another reign of sin and death out of harmony with the Lord's righteous arrangements. It is Adamic death that our Lord Jesus will destroy; and it is denominated an enemy because it came upon Adam's posterity contrary to their wills, and because some, at least, of the thousands of millions under its control, are disposed to be perfect and righteous, and are hindered by the weaknesses and restraints imposed by the great enemy in whose clutches they were born. It will be the "last enemy" to be destroyed, because other evils will be brought into subjection early in the Millennium; but men will get the victory over death only in proportion as they obey the voice of the great Teacher, Priest and King, and gradually rise, inch by inch, through restitution processes, up, up, up, out of death, until finally, at the close of the Millennial age, they shall reach life in its full, perfect degree. When all shall have become thus released from death to life, or else transferred to the second death,—*then* this enemy, death,—Adamic death,—will have been vanquished; its victory over all who long for righteousness and life eternal will be at an end.

"HELL" IN THE REVISED VERSION

It will be noticed that the translators of the Revised Version have usually avoided the use of the word "hell" throughout the Scriptures, substituting therefor in the Old Testament the Hebrew word "*sheol*," and in the New Testament the Greek word, "*hades*." Evidently, in view of the meaning attaching to the word "hell" the translators could not conscientiously so render *sheol* and *hades* and, therefore, avoided any translation;—not wishing to translate these words "grave," for fear, perhaps, that the public should quickly see that they had been hoodwinked on this subject for many years. We much prefer not to think ungenerously of men of such great scholarship but circumstances certainly point in this direction. One of these pointers is found in vs. 55, where, instead of translating *hades* "grave," as in the old version, or leaving it untranslated, *hades*, as in most other places in the Revised Version, they have translated it "death."

What was the object of this deviation from the general usage? We can only surmise that it was to help keep the public in the dark respecting the true sentiments of the Word of God. Had they rendered the sentence, "O *hades*, where is thy victory?" it would have given some, doubtless, the thought that *hades*, whatever it is (hot place of torture, or the cold grave), would finally yield to this triumph of the Lord Jesus, which will begin as soon as his church shall be "changed" and his kingdom established.

The Apostle continues his argument and shows that the victory will not be completely brought to pass until the end of the Millennium. He declares that the sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is in the law. Under Christ's Millennial kingdom the sins of the past will be forgiven, because of the atonement accomplished; and the perfect law of God, having been met by the Mediator, will be applied to the ransomed race only in such proportions as they can receive it—in proportion to their knowledge and ability to obey. Thus the Mediator of the New Covenant will ultimately bring off conquerors all who will obey him.

THE CHURCH'S PRESENT VICTORY

The Apostle next turns back the line of his argument from the future time, when men will be actually lifted up out of sin and death and imperfection, to the present time in which this is *reckonedly* accomplished for the church, the body of Christ, through faith. His words are, "But thanks be to God, which giveth us [now] the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Although as yet we see none of these things accomplished; although we have not our spiritual bodies, incorruptible and powerful; although we still have the treasure of the new mind in the earthen vessel; although we see nothing of the kingdom's establishment;—nevertheless, God giveth us victory through Christ, by faith; so that even now we can "rejoice with joy unspeakable," and can so confidently look forward into the future as to claim a share in the victory over sin and death and the grave, through him who loved us and bought us.

The closing argument is that on this account—because we see these things so clearly with the eye of faith, we should be "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labor is not in vain in the Lord;"—realizing that it is God who is working out this great plan of salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and supporting all those who are seeking to walk in his steps, and to come off conquerors through him. Death and the grave may still seem to be gaining victories over us. But faith sees the matter from the other side, from the standpoint of accomplished victory in the future; and even now it exults and rejoices in the privilege of colaboring with the Redeemer, and realizes that time and energy and life so spent are spent "not in vain," because we confidently hope for, expect and wait for the glorious first resurrection "change" and the glorious privileges of association with our Master in his kingdom and work.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

HOW SHALL WE VIEW SUICIDE?

Question.—How shall we view suicide? How serious is this matter? Should it be considered a crime?

Answer.—Suicide should be considered a very serious crime, unless it be the act of a deranged mind whose responsibility in the sight of God and men would, thereby, be considerably lessened.

Since the greatest gift of God is eternal life, through Christ, we may reason that life in any measure is an inestimable boon, privilege. For any sane mind, enlightened by present truth, to contemplate suicide would be unthinkable. We, above all others, realize the value of the present life: we see through it a special opportunity for the development of character along the lines of divine instruction. We see that the development of such character is essential to a share in any part in our heavenly Father's plan; we see, then, that whatever would prematurely take away our life privileges would be that much working against us, and our highest and best interests. We have faith to believe that our heavenly Father will even protect our lives so that nothing could happen to cut them off up to that point where we shall have had the full privilege and opportunity of character-development—making our calling and election sure. Any attempt on our part to cut short our own privileges would mean not only a rebellion against the divine will, but a folly as regards our own interests, incomprehensible, as we have just said, except under some mental delusion.

The Lord's people, especially in the light of present truth, should be overwhelmed with the privilege of living at such a time as this, as well as with the privilege granted to us of making our calling and our election sure to a share in the kingdom honors. There is no antidote for despondency so good as the medicine of the Lord's Word—its assurance that our Savior loved us so as to purchase us with his own blood, and his assurance, in turn, that "the Father himself loved us," and the additional assurance that "all things shall work together for good to us because we love God and have been called according to his purpose." "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself," and has with the hope a ground for joy and peace and trust and contentment which the world can neither give nor take away. Alas, poor world! We wonder that more of its number, without God, without hope, without intelligent knowledge of the divine plan working out blessing for the groaning creation, should not be tempted to do away with the present life—seeing in it no special value, no special blessing, no special opportunities, such as we see and enjoy and hope to realize.

"WHO IS BLIND, BUT MY SERVANT?"

Question.—To what or whom does Isa. 42:19-21 refer? Is it applicable to our Lord Jesus?

Answer.—This Scripture seems to apply to our Lord Jesus, and incidentally to the church which is his body. These are to be blind to some things—blind to earthly ambitions and prospects and worldly wisdom, to the intent that they may the more diligently render obedience to their high calling which leads them to ignore present advantages,—to sacrifice them all, laying down even life itself in the service of the truth. It is not the blindness of ignorance, as is indicated by verse 20. "Seeing many things ["but" omitted], thou observest not [heeded not; it is not that we do not see earthly advantages, but we purposely reject, close our eyes, to all such earthly allurements.]" The word "perfect" in v. 19 has the significance of surrendered or devoted. With this blindness Jehovah is well pleased; he accepts it as the atonement sacrifice, and thereby his law is proven to be reasonable, possible to be kept by a perfect man; yea, indeed, it is multiplied and shown to have a still higher and deeper scope than was ever previously comprehended.

KAISER WILLIAM'S THEOLOGY

About a year ago, at the German Emperor's instance, Professor Delitzsch delivered an address at the palace. He spoke on recent excavations in Babylon; attempting to show that the findings entirely discredited the Bible and proved that the Hebrews' intelligence of religious things came to them from the Babylonians. The impression went out that the Emperor was much pleased with that discourse, and evidently had lost his respect for the Bible. This greatly distressed some of his orthodox subjects and encouraged the Socialists, many of whom are reputed to be unbelievers—agnostics. To offset this, the Emperor has recently invited Professor Harnack to address his court on the same theme;—Professor Harnack being rated as "orthodox."

(We, however, could not rate the Professor as orthodox or Biblical. He holds that the Babylonian findings confirm the Bible records *in some respects;* viz., that there is a sufficient agreement between these witnesses and the Bible to prove that the Bible is not *a fable,*—that it records some facts of actual occurrence. However, Professor Harnack does not accept the Bible as of divine origin as do we, and hence *discredits its dates,* and accepts instead the uncertain decipherings of hieroglyphics relating to many dynasties (which may have existed contemporaneously) and by stringing these out one after the other, he and his associates count thousands of years which the Scriptures do not allow.)

Additionally, the Emperor prepared a letter which, as was intended, has been made public. In it he sets forth his religious views and, it is said, has quite *satisfied* his people. In this connection it should be remembered that the Emperor is *summus episcopus* of the Prussian Protestant church—its chief bishop, or overseer.

Commenting on the Emperor's action, the *London Times* correspondent says:—

"Orthodox Protestants seem to have apprehended that the foundations of the State, as well as the Church, would be undermined if the *summus episcopus* encouraged heterodoxy. The question has a deep political bearing also, because the Social Democrats are professedly anti-Christian in a doctrinal sense, and because nearly all the Liberals are freethinkers. The Conservative press is satisfied that the Kaiser holds to the essentials of orthodox Protestantism, and the Liberal press is pleased because the Kaiser's statement upholds the freedom of research and speculation for scholars.

"The Catholic *Kolnische Volks Zeitung* sees danger in this distinction between the learned and the 'people,' and the Radical *Berliner Tageblatt* comes to the far-fetched conclusion that the Kaiser's fearless initiative will produce the greatest and most triumphant impression in England and America, and may help to inspire friendlier feelings there for 'our Germanic cousins.'"

The "orthodox" are evidently easily satisfied. We trust that readers of ZION'S WATCH TOWER have a much more distinct idea of the inspiration of the Bible writers—the apostles and prophets—than has the Kaiser. We cannot with him count Moses in along with Shakespeare and the Kaiser's grandfather and Homer and Charlemagne. Moses was both a prophet and a type of the great Prophet, and hence, to us, belongs to an entirely different class from the worldly-wise and great. We quote a portion of the letter:—

"I distinguish between two different kinds of revelation—one progressive, and, as it were, historical; the other purely religious, as preparing the way for the future Messiah.

"Regarding the former, it must be said, for me it does not admit of a doubt, not even the slightest, that God reveals himself continuously in the race of men created by him. He breathed into man the breath of his life and follows with fatherly love and interest the development of the human race. In order to lead it forward and develop it, he reveals himself in this or that great sage, whether priest or king, whether among the heathen, Jews or Christians. Hammurabi was one; so was Moses, Abraham, Homer, Charlemagne, Luther, Shakespeare, Goethe, Kant and Emperor William the Great. These he sought out and endowed with his grace to accomplish splendid, imperishable results for their people in their intellectual and physical provinces, according to his will. How often my grandfather pointed out that he was only an instrument in the Lord's hands. . . .

"The legislative act on Sinai, for example, can be only regarded as symbolically inspired by God. When Moses had to reburnish well-known paragraphs of the law, perhaps derived from the code of Hammurabi, in order to incorporate and bind them into the loose, weak fabric of his people, here the historians can perhaps construe from the sense of wording a connection with the laws of Hammurabi, the friend of Abraham. This is perhaps logically correct. But that will never disguise the fact that God incited Moses thereto and in so far revealed himself to the people of Israel."

The Emperor has evidently become quite tinctured with higher-critic infidelity. If Moses concocted the Law with the assistance of a heathen legend which had been extant several centuries before he was born, he perpetrated a fraud at Mt. Sinai,—a stupendous fraud—when he represented that it was directly God given. Was our Lord also deceived respecting Hammurabi's law, palmed off by Moses as of divine origin? And were all the Jews, including the apostles, deceived? Hear our Lord's words, "Did not Moses give you the Law?" (John 7:19) When our Lord, after his resurrection, would establish the faith of the disciples on the way to Emmaus, we read: "Beginning with Moses and all the prophets he expounded unto them the Scriptures," etc. (Luke 24:27) Did he begin by quoting a fraud, a deceiver who had palmed off Hammurabi's law for a new divine code? Whoever believes so, cannot believe in our Lord's claims to Messiahship; for surely Messiah could not be inspired to know what was in man and yet be deluded as present-day wise men claim.

If these men are right Stephen, the first martyr to follow the Lord in death, for his sake, was deceived also. See his testimony concerning Moses in Acts 7:35-44, noting specially vss. 38 and 44.

Who that believes Moses a deceiver and a fraud could longer accept the inspiration of the words of the Apostle Paul on any subject, after noting his eulogy of Moses and the Law of God given by his hand? He says: "It is written in the law of Moses." (1 Cor. 9:9) Again he recites an incident of Moses' presence in Mt. Sinai, not as a part of a stupendous fraud, but as a fact; saying, "Moses . . . . put a vail over his face." (2 Cor. 3:7-13; Ex. 34:29, 30, 35) Again he ascribed that law to God, declaring it so "just and holy and good" that no fallen man could keep it. (Rom. 7:9-12) He even recites circumstantially the giving of the Law Covenant at Sinai, pointing out that this was a type of the ushering in of the New Covenant.—Heb. 12:18-26.

"The Law was given [of God] by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." "Moses verily *was faithful,* as a servant over all his house"—he was, therefore, not a fraud. —John 1:17; Heb. 3:5.

The great and worldly-wise are all to stumble into just such unbelief respecting God's Word, but the faithful are to be kept by the power of God through faith and by assistance divinely granted in this "evil day." "A thousand shall fall at thy side, but it [the pestilence of infidelity] shall not come nigh thee." The elect will stand on a sea of glass, as it were mingled with fire, and be able to sing intelligently "the song of Moses, the servant of God [not a fraud], and the Lamb."—Rev. 15:3.

Quoting further from the war-lord-bishop we are touched to sympathy by his "blind unreason" in the following "most orthodox" sentence,—in which he attempts to discuss what he, evidently, in no sense understands. How true that "the natural man receiveth not [comprehendeth not] the things of the spirit of God: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14) He says:—

"Christ is God, God in human form. He redeemed us and inspires us, entices us to follow him. We feel his fire burning in us. His sympathy strengthens us. His discontent destroys us. But, also his intercession saves us. Conscious of victory, building solely upon his Word, we go through labor, ridicule, sorrow, misery and death, for we have in him God's revealed Word, and he never lies."

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM GRANTED BY THE CZAR OF ALL THE RUSSIANS

St. Petersburg, (Press Cable).—The Czar has issued a decree providing for freedom of religion throughout his dominions, establishing to some degree local self-government and making other concessions to the village committees.

Among the measures outlined by the Czar for the attainment of these ends is reform of the rural laws, which is to be effected with the advice of persons who possess the confidence of the people. The system of administration in the various governments and districts is to be examined by representatives of the different localities concerned, with the view of effecting the necessary amendments. Measures are also to be taken to relieve the peasantry of the burdens of forced labor.

The decree, which was issued in commemoration of the anniversary of the birthday of Alexander III., is considered to be the most significant act of state since the emancipation of serfs. The public hails it as the proclamation of a new era, opening up bright prospects of the early improvement of Russian internal administration.

All who love righteousness and freedom will rejoice in the news conveyed by the above dispatch. However, it would not be wise for us to expect great and speedy changes as a result of this decree. It is almost forced upon the Czar by the poverty and discontent of the people; and it may be a considerable time before the promised reforms are realized. Powerful nobles are opposed to reform, and many of the evils are deeply entrenched in the customs of the land. As yet it is only a *paper* reform; but it is an illustration of the *melting* of the mountains [kingdoms] predicted by the prophet.—Psa. 97:5.

The extent to which this decree will affect the political or religious liberties of Jews is doubtful; we expect little from it to their advantage.

TRUST METHODS IN CHURCH WORK

We quote below from the Chicago *Inter-Ocean*. Where the matter may end is difficult to determine now, but that it is along the lines of higher-criticism, and therefore opposed to real Bible study, from the standpoint of faith, is never to be forgotten. Extracts follow:—

"The purpose of the new organization, which will be known as 'the Religious Educational Association,' is to bring about a greater unification of religious interests, irrespective of denomination or creed, and to disseminate religious education through the various mediums outlined in the constitution and by-laws adopted by the conference at the afternoon and closing session of the conference.

"President William R. Harper of the University of Chicago, in his address before the convention, gave a comprehensive and detailed outline of the real scope and purposes of the new organization. All of Dr. Harper's suggestions concerning the new work were adopted by the convention.

" 'The new organization will be something of a clearing house for religious thought and work,' said Dr. Harper in his address. He urged the necessity of cooperation among the various religious bodies in stimulating and carrying on the work of the Sunday school and church.

" 'There is a great waste of effort for the lack of co-relation,' declared Dr. Harper. 'The new organization will undertake to render service in stimulating present agencies to greater effort, such aid being furnished through suggestion, through the publication of information concerning the work at large, through the provison of larger and better opportunities for these agencies to confer together, and through the help derived from personal contact with each other of those interested in the same divisions of work.'

"Departments and committees represented in the various organizations were named in the constitution adopted by the convention to carry on the work of the organization:—Universities and colleges, theological seminaries, churches and pastors, Sunday schools, secondary public schools, elementary public schools, private schools, teacher-training, young men and young women's associations, young people's societies, the home, libraries, the press, correspondence instruction, religious art, and music.

"Three classes of members are to be admitted. These are active, associate and corresponding.

"The new organization will include the establishment of a central board of trustees or directors, which will constitute the executive body of the association, and as such arrange the programs of special and general conventions, secure by proper means the coordination of the work of the departments, and carry into effect the decisions of the association.

"The members of the board will represent the various countries, states, territories and districts furnishing the membership of the association; also the various religious denominations and the various schools of opinion recognized as Christian; and still further, the various divisions of Christian activity, educational, evangelical and philanthropic.

"The principal address of the afternoon was made by the Rev. Frank Gunsaulus. He declared it was not the intention of the new organization to interfere with the work being done by the various lines of religious organizations, but to aid these in securing better results. He said that the field was sufficiently wide to permit the exercise of the very best energies of all who desired to engage in the work. He predicted a useful future for the new organization, and closed his address with an eloquent plea for church unity in educational work.

"President Charles J. Little of Garrett Biblical Institute said he regretted that the Catholics and Jews were not included in the new organization. 'They exclude themselves from conferences of this kind, but I sincerely hope that the day will soon dawn,' declared Mr. Little, 'when we can all get together on common ground.' "

GEN. CHAFFEE STARTLES METHODIST SOCIAL UNION

New York, March 20.—Maj. Gen. Chaffee told the members of the Methodist Social union tonight that he never met an intelligent Chinese who expressed any desire to embrace the Christian religion.—Pittsburg *Gazette*.

* * *

General Chaffee has been in China for a considerable time, and is widely recognized as a moderate man, whose general sympathies are with the Christian religion; hence, his opinion is weighty. It attests the wisdom of God in passing by the Chinese and sending the Gospel to the European barbarians eighteen centuries ago. Evidently there will not be many representatives from China in the "elect church," "the bride, the Lamb's wife."

Thank God for the good hopes inspired by the great oath-bound promise made to Abraham, of which we, the church, are heirs (Gal. 3:29)—that all the families of the earth shall yet be blessed with a knowledge of the Lord and with an opportunity for applying that knowledge, so as to return to God's favor and life everlasting.

"LEST YE ENTER INTO TEMPTATION"

"Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."—Mark 14:38.

It seems peculiar that there should be greater liability of falling into sin at one season than at another; but, nevertheless, we have noticed for several years, and have before called to the attention of others, the *peculiar* force of temptations at the time of the Passover, every Spring. Year after year at this season we have noticed special liability of many or all to stumble, or "be offended." Let us, therefore, take earnest heed to our Lord's words, and earnestly watch and pray for others and for ourselves; and let each one be on his guard not to cast a stumbling-block before his brother.—Rom. 14:13; Heb. 2:1.

It was at the Passover season that our Lord said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Then many of his friends and followers said, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it? . . . and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, "Will ye also go away?"—John 6:4, 51, 60, 66, 67.

It was at the Passover season that Judas bargained for the betrayal of our Lord,—and a little later on accomplished it.

It was about the Passover season that our Lord said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." (Matt. 26:38) "I have a baptism [death] to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"—Luke 12:50.

It was about the Passover season that our Lord took the disciples and began to explain unto them that the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of the chief priests and scribes and be put to death (Matt. 16:21); and then Peter was tempted to forget that he was the disciple, and took the Lord and began to rebuke him, saying, "Be it far from thee, Lord. This shall not be unto thee." Thus also he tempted our Lord to repudiate his sacrifice, and brought upon himself the rebuke —"Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savorest not of the things that be of God, but those things that be of men."—Verses 22, 23.

It was while met to eat the Passover that the twelve got into a dispute as to which of them should be greatest in the kingdom. They thus brought upon themselves our Lord's just rebuke, and induced the illustration of humility on his part by the washing of their feet.

It was when they had sung a hymn and gone out from the Passover that our Lord used to them the words at the head of this article, "Watch ye, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation;" while he himself was in an agonizing battle, and with bloody sweat submitting his will to the will of God; and, praying earnestly, was strengthened.—Luke 22:39-46.

It was but a little later that the emissaries of the high priest came upon them and the eleven all forsook the Lord and fled (Mark 14:50): the temptation, the fear they could not resist.

It was but a little later that Peter and John, bolder than the others, went with the crowd into Pilate's court to see what would befall the Master; and Peter, being recognized as one of Christ's disciples, was tempted to *deny the Lord* with cursing.—Mark 14:68, 70, 71.

It was at the same time that our Lord was tempted before Pilate, but victoriously "witnessed a good confession."—1 Tim. 6:13.

The temptations of our Lord followed rapidly. When his foes spat upon him, and crowned him with thorns, and reviled him, saying, "Let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen

of God," he could have smitten them with disease or death; but, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He overcame, and prayed for those who despitefully used him.—Isa. 53:7; Luke 23:33-37.

He might even have concluded that he would not be the Redeemer of such thankless beings; but, while realizing that he could even then ask of the Father and receive the assistance of twelve legions of angels and overcome his enemies, he resisted the temptation. He *gave* himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

The death of our Lord was a great trial of faith to all the disciples, who straightway were tempted to go again to their old fishing business, and neglect the fishing for men.—John 21:3-17.

Paul and the other apostles subsequently had special trials at this special season also. See Acts 20:16; 21:10, 11, 27-36.

In view of all this in the past, as well as in view of our own experience since the present harvest began in 1874, we feel specially solicitous for the Lord's sheep every Spring; and this Spring is no exception. What may be the character of the temptations, we may not clearly discern until they are upon us; for if we knew all about them in advance they would be but slight temptations. Watch, therefore, and pray always: for the only safe way is to be prepared; because your adversary, the devil, is seeking whom he may devour. He knows your weak points, and is ready to take advantage of them. We will each need the graces of the spirit in our hearts, as well as the Lord's "grace to help in time of need" if we would overcome. "Watch ye, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation!"

"My soul, be on thy guard,
Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the prize."

* * *

"Whosoever will live godly shall suffer persecution."

"They have called the Master of the house Beelzebub. . . . The servant is not above his Lord."

Our Lord said to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all over me except it were given thee from above." The same is true of every member of his body.

"A man's foes shall be they of his own household."

"They shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. . . . Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven."

"The god of this world . . . . now worketh in the children of disobedience." . . . . "We are not ignorant of his devices."

THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

On Friday evening, April 10th, we celebrate the greatest event of this world's history: the death of our Lord Jesus, the Redeemer of Adam and his race from the death sentence of the violated law of God. "Christ our Passover is slain, therefore let us keep the feast . . . . with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." Elsewhere we have explained why this Memorial supersedes the typical Passover lamb, etc., and on the same date annually; and the meaning of the bread as the emblem of our Lord's body, "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," and the "cup" as representing his sacrificial death, etc.—See our issue of March 1, 1898.

We earnestly desire that all interested in the divine plan of the ages, trusting in the precious blood and consecrated to the Lord's service,—even unto death—may appreciate the great privilege and blessing of this service;—wherever they may be and however few may be their collective number. Surely nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ our Lord and, likewise, nothing shall hinder us from thus confessing his great work for us and our great reliance upon him and our respect for his words, This do ye [as often as ye do it] in remembrance of me;—annually.

The Allegheny church cordially invites all of the class described who can make it convenient to celebrate the Memorial with us in the Bible House Chapel at 7:30 p.m. on the date named. However, we urge that so far as possible each little group usually meeting together do so on this occasion,—after the custom of our Lord's time,—each family by itself,—each group of the Lord's children by itself.

We trust for a great blessing upon us all in connection with this service, and are praying for it as one of the things that the Father would be pleased to have us ask for. We hope to hear from the various gatherings by postal card as quickly as possible after the celebration;—the number present and the degree of blessing experienced.

OBLIGATIONS OF A CHRISTIAN

ROMANS 13:7-14.—APRIL 19.

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law."

Some one has well denominated this 13th chapter of Romans "The Christian Citizen's Chapter." We might consider it remarkable, almost to the extent of amazement, that every feature of Christian life, duty and character is set forth some where in the apostolic writings, did we not remember that the apostles, as the stars, or bright ones, of the church, were specially held in the hand of the Lord; specially guided in their utterances, that they should set forth the whole counsel of God, that the man of God might be thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work.

There is a vast difference between the governmental conditions of the present time and those which prevailed at about the time of the writing of this epistle. Monarchs are no longer absolute; and it is difficult for us to conceive the condition of things in which an emperor had authority not only to set apart culprits as victims for death in public spectacles, but after these had been destroyed, had the authority also to instruct his servants to select further victims from amongst the audience. It is when we get before our minds this view of atrocious government which prevailed in the Apostle's day that we get the full scope of his injunction, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for the powers that be are ordained of God." It is comparatively easy to be subject to the higher powers in civilized lands today, for although absolute justice might not be meted out in every instance, there is at least an endeavor to render a show of justice, such as the world has never before known. We should be very thankful that our lot has been favorably cast in this respect. In declaring that "the powers that be are ordained of God," we are not to understand the Apostle to mean that they are endorsed by God, nor that their decisions, rules, etc., are approved by him or are in harmony with his rules and laws. The Apostle's intimation means simply that in divine providence things are as they are, and our God, who knows all the circumstances and conditions, permits them to be as they are, though he could overthrow and overturn and substitute his own kingdom of righteousness. Nevertheless, this is not his plan; but rather for the time being he permits the kingdoms of this world, whose rulers are under the prince of this world, and largely blinded by his deceptions, to take much their own course—subject only to certain limitations by which the Lord hinders Satan and any of his misguided dupes from doing real injury to the best interests of the Lord's people or to the thwarting of the divine plan. His divine power overrules the wrath of man and makes it to praise him, and the remainder, which will not accomplish anything of good, but which would be subversive of the divine arrangements, he will restrain.—Psa. 76:10.

"Render, therefore, to all their dues"—to all men as well as to all rulers—in financial as well as political matters. A great mistake, we believe, is being made along these lines today. The general sentiment amongst Christian people is that Christian citizenship implies engaging in political strife—and endeavoring to determine who shall be the rulers, striving to better the laws and have them obeyed, and putting forth efforts to oppose and rebuke bad laws. It will be noticed that the Apostle gives no such advice. On the contrary, he elsewhere declares, "Your citizenship is in heaven." (Phil. 3:20, R. V.) We are strangers and foreigners in the kingdoms of this world. Our kingdom is yet to come; it is promised, and we are praying for it, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth," and we are expecting it; but meantime, as foreigners, "not of this world" (John 18:36), it is our business to render obedience to the laws, customs, usages, of this world, in so far as these do not infringe upon our conscientious obligations to the Lord and the truth; but this does not mean that we are to become partizans in political strifes, and contentions amongst men. Let the world elect its own rulers in whatever way it sees best; we put up with whatever it provides with thankfulness, with gratitude to God for whatever may come, with the realization that he will guide and care for us under all circumstances, and that in any event our highest interests are being conserved. Obedience to the laws of the land might at some time oblige us to bear arms, and in such

event it would be our duty to go into the army, if unable in any legal and proper manner to obtain exemption, but it would not be our duty to volunteer. We are soldiers in another army, which battles not with carnal weapons, and whose contests are from an entirely different standpoint and in an entirely different spirit. There could be nothing against our consciences in going into the army. Wherever we would go we could take the Lord with us, the Captain of our salvation, and wherever we would go we could find opportunities to serve him and his cause. If it came to the point of battling we above all others need have no fear of death, but we, assuredly, would be obliged to draw the line when commanded to fire, and we could not, in harmony with the divine program, fire upon a fellow-creature with the intention of taking his life. If we fired we should be obliged to fire either into the air or into the ground. All this army service would come in under this heading, "Render to all their dues." The governor of the state has the right, under the laws, to call for and to conscript, if necessary, soldiers for the defense of the state and of the nation; and if such requisition be enforced upon us we must render our dues and take our share in the trials and difficulties of the service, whatever they may be. The Apostle, however, stipulates more particularly what he means by dues, showing that he does not mean that we owe it to others to vote, to participate in political strifes. He had particularly in mind the paying of tribute, custom, fear, honor, to whom these are due. Tribute was the tax payable by a subject nation to the principal power, as, for instance, by the Jewish nation to the Roman Empire while its vassel. Custom is a tariff duty, or tax, levied in one form or another for the support of government, by a tax upon imports or exports or by direct taxation. Fear, or reverence, is differentiated from honor, or respect, in the sense that it may be the duty to salute an officer or representative of the government, by baring the head or bowing the knee, or otherwise, thus showing him honor or respect, not necessarily as a man, but as an officer, regardless of his personal character. The fear that is to be rendered is in the sense of obedience, as we elsewhere read, "Fear the judge." The commands of the judge or court are to be obeyed—whatever others might be disposed to do, Christians are never to be found in contempt of court, but are to obey its rules to the very letter, whether they consider them just or unjust, because the judge is the representatives of the law, and God permits the law and the judge, and commands us to be subject to whatever he permits. If, therefore, as our Lord explained, someone shall sue us at the law, and take away our coat, or if it include our cloak also, all that we had, we are not to resist; we are to be obedient to the powers that be. This does not mean, however, that we shall willingly submit to the coat or cloak or other articles being taken from us illegally or unjustly without process of law.

Having thus considered the Christian's obligation to the government, the Apostle next passes to the consideration of the Christian's obligation to his neighbors. He is to owe no man anything. This does not necessarily mean that he must not, under any circumstances, borrow, but that if he borrows with a specific understanding respecting the time of return of the money or goods, he shall be prompt to meet the obligation. And unless he is absolutely certain of his ability to meet the obligation, or can give security such as a mortgage, he should not borrow. There is, however, the standing advice of the Word of God that the children of the great King should be lenders, and not borrowers. "Do good and lend." Indeed, we believe that it would be to the advantage of every child of God if he would put in practise the Apostle's words in this lesson in the most absolute sense, and never borrow anything; never owe anything; paying for what he needs at the time of purchase, or else waiting for it until, in the Lord's providence, he is able to pay for it in advance.

There is one thing, however, the Apostle implies we are continually owing to our fellow-creatures, not only to the members of our own family and our own neighborhood, but to all men; viz., love. We owe them this, under the divine law, and it is a part of Christian duty to discharge this obligation daily. A parent or member of the family is to see that he does his part in support of the home and its comforts and privileges and quiet and harmony, that his influence in his neighborhood amongst his friends and acquaintances shall be for good and not for evil, for peace and not for strife. And as the Apostle elsewhere remarks, if he is to do good unto all men, as he has opportunity, and because he loves all and desires their welfare, much more especially is he to have such sentiments and conduct toward those of the household of faith. (Gal. 6:10) He is to be ready to do good at the expense of his own time and convenience, to all men, but he is to be ready to lay down his life for the brethren—he is to seek opportunities for laying down his life day after day, in the sense of giving his time to the communication of the truth, or helping the Lord's brethren in any manner, to put on the whole armor of God, and to stand in the evil day.

The Apostle calls attention to the comprehensive statement of the Law set forth by our Lord; viz., that love is the fulfilling of the law, and that, therefore, love for the neighbor signifies that the law of God is fulfilled toward our neighbor. It will be remembered, however, that the law of love is divided into two parts; first, love to God; second, love to our fellows; and the loving of our neighbor would, therefore, be only a part of the fulfilling of the entire love to God. After loving our neighbor, and even laying down our life for him, we would need to see to it that we do not neglect the first feature of this law; viz., that we should love God more than our neighbor and more than ourselves, so that every human interest and matter would be sacrificed gladly in response to our conviction of the divine will.

Going on to speak of the fulfillment of this second part of the law of love—the duty toward the neighbor,—the Apostle enumerates the essence of some of the commandments respecting murder, adultery, false witness, theft, covetousness, and all other commandments that relate to our fellow-creatures—they are all met by the law of love to our neighbor. The commandments of the Decalogue were all of a negative character, "Thou shalt not" do this or that which would be injurious to thy neighbor. But the new law of love is positive, and declares, upon the other side of the question, "Thou shalt love" thy neighbor. Love, therefore, meets all the requirements of the "shalt nots" of the Ten Commandments and much more. For whosoever, in obedience to this law of love, is seeking to do good to his neighbor, will surely not slander him nor murder him nor steal from him nor covet his goods, nor otherwise do, or wish to do him injury, or even to think of him with unkindness.

Having considered these two points; viz., duty to rulers and duty to neighbors, the Apostle next turns to the Christian's duty toward himself, declaring, "Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep." The Christian is to realize that he, and in general the whole world, has been asleep in a sort of stupor, in respect to the highest and best and noblest things. Now having gotten the eyes of his understanding opened, and being, at least, partially awake to righteousness, he begins to weigh and measure matters after a fashion different from his previous course. He begins to estimate rightly the things of this present life, as not worthy to be compared with the glorious things which belong to the eternal life. He begins to realize that the world has now been six days (a thousand years each—2 Pet. 3:8) under the reign of sin and death, and that the morning of the great Sabbath of refreshment and blessing and rest is at hand. As he realizes this he should feel disposed to arouse himself and shake himself thoroughly from the dust of ignorance, superstition, blindness and sordidness, and to live in harmony with the glorious hopes he now entertains—living for the new era, the new dispensation, which he sees is approaching, realizing that day by day since first he believed, his salvation is drawing nearer. Instructed by the Word of God, he will not expect his salvation except in connection with the second coming of our Lord Jesus and the establishment of his kingdom; as the Apostle in another place declares. "The grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—1 Pet. 1:13.

The thought of the second coming of the Lord was continually before the apostles; and our Lord evidently designed that it should be constantly an incentive to all the members of his church throughout the age. This, undoubtedly, was one reason why he did not particularly explain the length of time that would intervene—it would be a short time from God's standpoint, and even from the human standpoint it would be a short time to each individual who would have only the few remaining years of life wherein to make ready for the glorious things of the future; since "in death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave who can give thee thanks?" —Psa. 6:5.

Looking back, and perceiving that about 4178 years had already passed in sin and gross darkness upon the world, the Apostle realized that the night was surely far spent, and the day not far distant. And now we, living eighteen centuries nearer to the day, are highly favored by the Lord in this due time, in that we are permitted to see the particulars that were obscure to some extent in the Apostle's day. We believe that the day is actually at hand; that we are now living in the early dawn of the new dispensation, and that as soon as the harvest of this Gospel age shall be gathered, the work of change, or transformation, by which the kingdoms of this world shall, in a great time of trouble, become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ, is nigh, even at the door.

What is the force of the Apostle's argument to those who

see as he did the approaching kingdom of light, that shall banish all the darkness of sin, ignorance, superstition, etc? It is expressed in his words, "Let us, therefore, cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light." The works of darkness would be any works whatsoever that would not stand the fullest investigation; that would not stand approval in the light of the new dispensation, if it were already fully ushered in. Let us remember that we belong to the new dispensation, and not to the old, and should, therefore, live in accordance with our citizenship and our responsibilities toward the Prince of light and in opposition to the prince of darkness, his works and his ways.

We have elsewhere considered this matter of putting on the armor of light; and the necessity, as expressed in the Apostle's statement, that the particular period of time in which the change from the dominion of the prince of this world to the kingdom of God's dear Son will be a specially evil day—a day, a period, in which all the children of light will be crucially tested; such a day as will try every man's work and faith what they are; a day and a fiery trial through which only the gold, silver and precious stones will pass unscathed, and in which all the hay, wood and stubble of error and sin and human tradition and falsehood will be entirely destroyed. No wonder, then, that the Apostle repeatedly urges us to put on the armor of light—preparation by the Lord's people for the trials of this particular time, which we perceive is now just upon us—in fact, we are already passing into these very fires of this day of trial. We are already in the time when the wood, hay and stubble is being consumed, and when Higher Criticism, Evolutionary theory, Christian Science, Hypnotism, under its own name and known as Mind Cures, etc., are devouring as a flame all that are not fully devoted to the Lord, and, therefore, specially kept by his power through his Word and providence.

Let us walk honestly, as in the day. We are not yet fully in the day, but we belong to the new era, and are, therefore, to live even in this present time as nearly as possible up to the perfect standards of the future. So to live will signify self-denial—will imply that we will be misunderstood by the world: will imply that we will be thought foolish, and that we will be considered enemies, not only by those who are in gross darkness, but particularly by those who profess to be the Lord's people, children of the light, but who really prefer darkness and error rather than light and truth. We are inclined to lay special stress on this word "honestly," and to believe that the Apostle used it advisedly and in a particular sense.

As we look all about us we find that dishonesty is very prevalent; not merely in the world, when we expect a certain amount of duplicity and misrepresentation and deception, and people passing for what they are not, but we find this kind of dishonesty very prevalent amongst professing Christians; yea, we have known ministers to boast of their dishonesty—to declare that they never did believe the creed which they had professed to believe and vowed they would teach to others. Intelligent ministers are today preaching in all denominations what they do not believe, standing for creeds and theories which misrepresent their true sentiments. They are acting dishonestly; they are searing their own consciences; they are putting themselves into a condition where they cannot make progress into the light of the truth; for surely God does not want dishonest people in his elect church. Surely, unless they become honest, they will have their portion with the hypocrites, for the hypocrites are the dishonest. "Let us walk honestly," appeals to every true child of God.

Each one should see to it that he is honest, not only in matters of dollars and cents, but honest in his treatment of his neighbors, in his treatment of the brethren, in the church, and above all, honest in his confessions respecting his God and his faith. The test is being made along this line, and those who love the favor of men rather than the favor of God, and who dishonestly are willing to confess and profess a lie, will be given up to their lie, will be permitted to blight their eternal interests, will be proving themselves unfit for the kingdom—whatever else they may ultimately become fit for. This is the very essence of the Apostle's declaration in his letter to the Thessalonians (2 Thess. 2:11), when speaking of this evil day, and the great trial that would come upon the church, he declares that God will send them strong delusions that they might believe a lie—because they were not honest—because they did not obey the truth in the love of it, but acted deceptively, hypocritically, two-facedly.

Our translators seem to have forgotten that these epistles were written to "the saints" (Rom. 1:8), and not to the world, hence, when speaking of certain sins they used English words, which would be applicable to the most depraved class in describing the crimes and wrong course—instead of using such language as would properly represent the misdemeanors that might be expected amongst the saints. There is an illustration of this in our lesson (verse 13), where the Apostle is represented as saying to the saints that they should not indulge in rioting, drunkenness, chambering and wantonness. It is true that the saints should not indulge in any of those things; but it is true also that no saints would think of indulging in such orgies.

The Apostle's meaning, to our understanding, is a much more refined one than these words would represent. He urges us that in view of the time, and that we are children of the day, that we should not engage in worldly revelries, time-killing pleasures, harmless though they be, and that we should not be intoxicated with the spirit of this world. As, for instance, some have an intoxication for money, wealth; others an intoxication for business; others for dress; others for music; others for art; but as the Lord's people, who have got a glimpse of the new day, and the great work of God which is to be accomplished in that day, our hearts should be so absorbed in the work of God that these matters, which would be thought proper enough and right enough in others, worldly people—because they are not awake as we are, and because they see not the future as we see it—should be far from our conception and our course.

In urging the saints to avoid chambering and wantonness, we are not to understand the Apostle to mean fornication and adultery, and general lasciviousness, as he might warn the most depraved and most benighted of the children of this world. We are to understand him to address these words to the saints, urging them to continence in their social relations—urging that the thoughts of the kingdom shall lift their minds and disengage their affections to a large extent, at least, from the earthly affections and the lawful sexual congress. This is a statement to the Romans of the same thing that he mentions to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 7:29); "Brethren, the time is short; it remaineth both that they that have wives be as though they had none, ... and they that use this world as not abusing it." The Apostle, however, puts limitations to this counsel, as expressed in vss. 5-7 of the same chapter. This interpretation of the Apostle's sentiments is fully corroborated by the concluding words of this verse (13). By the general rules of language he would not begin his argument with the grosser sins, and end with the less, but reversely, concludes with the stronger argument. Here he concludes with the exhortation that the saints, in watching as in the day, shall avoid strife and envy.

The other difficulties would be comparatively their own concern—their participation in revelries might do no harm to others, their being overcharged with a spirit of intoxication for wealth or fashion or art or music, might do no injury to others, their inordinateness in lawful sexual matters might do no injury to the cause in general; but when he comes to strife and envy he notes two qualities which reach out and would not only imply a wrong condition of heart on the part of the transgressor, which indulged would ultimately bar him from the kingdom, but would represent also elements of character which would be injurious to the whole body of Christ, which is the church. And be it noticed that these various dispositions, carelessness of life, the overcharged, or drunken condition, as respects earthly affairs (Luke 21:34), and lack of self-restraint in connubial relationship, would be very apt to go hand in hand with a wrong spirit in the church—a spirit of strife, contention, wilfulness—not submitting to the divine Word and providence, but, on the contrary, the arousing of jealousies, ambitions, on behalf of self or others, for prominence in the body.

To the contrary of all this, the saints are to seek more and more to put on the Lord Jesus Christ—to take each to himself the characteristics of the Lord Jesus—his meekness, his patience, his gentleness, his forbearance, his love, his willingness to be servant of all, his temperateness and moderation in all things, his complete devotion to the Father, his complete submission to the holy spirit in all of his affairs.

In thus seeking to be like the Lord the saints are to "make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." They will find the flesh continually insisting that it be recognized, that it be not mortified, that plans and arrangements shall be made for its comfort, pleasure, gratification. The saints, however, are to make no such provision; they are to ignore the flesh, to the extent they are able; they are to consider its tastes, appetites and preferences, as generally depraved and improper to be gratified. They are to do this so thoroughly that they will make no provision for it, but merely provide for the doing of the will of the Lord in all things, whether the will of the Lord be pleasant or unpleasant, agreeable or disagreeable to the flesh.

"LOVE AS BRETHREN"

ACTS 21:1-12.—APRIL 26.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"The will of the Lord be done."*—Acts 21:14.

Brotherhood in Christ is the closest of all relationships, and many incidents in the Apostle's journey from Ephesus to Jerusalem illustrate this brotherhood relationship most beautifully. In a preceding lesson we had the account of the parting of Paul and his company from the elders at Ephesus, and of their loving demonstration and tears and prayers. The first verse of this lesson says, "After we were gotten from them," etc.,—the words "gotten from" signifying, torn ourselves away, as though the hearts of all were so thoroughly united that the separation meant the breaking of very tender ties. And so we find it to be today, with the Lord's similarly consecrated people. They become attached to each other in a manner that formal creeds and confessions in earthly bundles, or denominations, do not bind. Each one who is united to Christ feels a special interest in, and sympathy for, each fellow-member, so that, as the Apostle says, if one member rejoice all are glad, and if one member be in trouble or affliction or sorrow all are sympathetically affected. This will be noticeable in proportion as the law of love develops and abounds in each member. The little love in the beginning of Christian character will expand and deepen, filling all the avenues of the heart, and sanctifying them in a pure, unselfish, holy love.

The voyage from Miletus to Patara was probably in a small coasting vessel. At the latter port they found a larger seagoing vessel, on which they made the through journey to Tyre. At the latter place the Apostle and his companions hunted up some believers, whom they previously knew resided there. This is another evidence of affection and interest. Apparently the number of the interested was small, just as today; the twos and threes, sixes and sevens, are much more numerous than larger companies. The fewness did not hinder the Apostle from seeking them out, that he might encourage and strengthen them. Rather, we may say that in some respects the appreciation of the fact that the Lord's jewels are not numerous makes them all the more precious. In this little church were some who evidently had the gift of prophecy, as it was granted in the early church—foretelling future events, just as with the prophets of old, Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc., except that those of the earlier dispensation spoke evidently in a more public manner, while these latter had messages especially for the Apostle and the church. The message that came to them was to the effect that the Apostle at Jerusalem would be caused to suffer; would be imprisoned, maltreated, etc., and on this account they urged him not to go. The Apostle tells us previously, that the spirit witnessed in various places that bonds and imprisonment awaited him; but, nevertheless, he understood it to be the divine will that he should go to Jerusalem, and that, hence, he would not hesitate, knowing that the Lord was able to work out his own good purposes, if he were obedient. We are not to understand this testimony of these local prophets to be a contradiction of the Apostle's understanding of the same holy spirit's leading; the one teaching him that he should go to Jerusalem, the other teaching that he should not go to Jerusalem. We are rather to understand that these prophets merely had from God a revelation to the effect that Paul would suffer violence in the city of the great King, and that on the strength of this information they themselves advised the Apostle not to go. But Paul, without disrespect, or in any degree impugning the truthfulness of their message, drew a different lesson from it—understood the Lord's message differently. He saw that this meant a trial of his faith, his zeal, his perseverance, and that for him to yield to these suggestions, through fear, would have been an evidence of his lack of confidence in God, since the Lord had himself revealed to him that he should go up to Jerusalem.

It may be wondered why the Apostle would feel so urgently desirous of going to Jerusalem, knowing in advance what to expect. We reply that he evidently realized that the work amongst the Gentiles was growing considerably, and that there was a feeling that there was a more or less clearly defined separation of interest and sympathy as between believing Gentiles and believing Jews, and that part of the Apostle's object in this visit was to counteract this tendency and to help cement the Church as one. He was taking with him contributions from the various churches amongst the Gentiles to the poor of the larger congregation at Jerusalem, a thank-offering to the Lord for the good things which had been sent to them through their Jewish brethren. These offerings would attest the love and fellowship of the Gentile believers, and help to convince the brethren at Jerusalem that those abroad had one and the same spirit as those with whom they were better acquainted in Palestine. Then again, in Paul's company were several Gentile representatives, as it were, of the grace of God amongst the Gentiles—noble brethren, whose meekness, patience, gentleness, long-suffering; brotherly kindness and various fruits of the spirit fully attested the work of grace amongst the Gentiles to be the same as amongst the Jews. Furthermore, the Apostle realized that some had, intentionally or unintentionally, misrepresented his position—claiming that he was an opponent of the Law and of the Jews. He was an opponent of neither; he loved the Jews as his brethren, and he loved the Law of Moses, realizing that it was just, perfect and good, and so great and wonderful a law that no fallen human being could possibly live up to all of its requisites, and that, therefore, whoever would be justified could not be justified by the Law, through obedience to it, but must be justified according to God's arrangement—justified by faith. During this visit he hoped to be able to show that he had no disrespect for the Law, but that as Jesus magnified it, held it up, and showed how great and wonderful a law it was, he, Paul, magnified the Law of God, the Law of Moses, and showed that it could be kept only reckonedly, by any of the fallen race, and then only by those who could have imputed to them the righteousness of Christ to make up for their blemishes and shortcomings.

Furthermore, he foresaw the complete fall of his nation from all divine favor into unbelief and a great time of trouble, just at hand, and he, doubtless, desired to make one further effort amongst the Jews to give a final testimony that might be helpful to some, hoping that his experience in the many years amongst the Gentiles might have brought him greater wisdom in knowing how to present the gracious message. We know that these were his sentiments respecting the condition of the Jews, because his Epistle to the Romans had already been written—after he left Ephesus, presumably at Corinth,—and in that Epistle to the Romans it will be remembered that in the ninth, tenth and eleventh chapters the Apostle clearly sets forth the stumbling of the whole Jewish nation, only a remnant taking hold upon the Lord Jesus, the rest being blinded until the fulness of the Gentiles should be come in. We remember his explanation of the olive tree, whose root was the promise made to Abraham, and whose branches were the individuals of the Jewish nation. The breaking off of these branches from divine favor left opportunity for grafting into this olive tree—of divine favor and participation in the covenant made with Abraham—of all of the Gentiles who should heartily accept the Redeemer. The Apostle had all these thoughts, then, clearly in his mind. He had no expectation of being able to turn Israel as a nation, but he did wish them to discern his love for them, and his earnest desire to assist them, that peradventure he might remove from the minds of the Apostles not only any prejudice they might, as Jews, have had against the Gentile converts, but that, additionally, he might assist some who had not yet made a decision, not yet gone into the condition or darkness, stumbling, etc. Here again love as brethren is manifest. The Apostle loved the Jewish nation with an intense love, as is witnessed by his declaration, "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." (Rom. 9:3) Not that he would wish to suffer eternal torture for them, nor yet that he would wish to be cut off in the second death for them; but that he was willing to be cut off from participation in the glories of the kingdom, as a member of the body of Christ, if thereby he could have brought his nation into that glorious position, the first right to which belonged to them as a people, until they rejected it.

The stay with the little company at Tyre lasted seven days, while their vessel was unloading its cargo and reloading another. As we read the account of how the disciples at Tyre, with their wives and children, accompanied the Apostle and his companions to the ship, and all kneeled in prayer on the shore, we say to ourselves that the spirit of discipleship was evidently the same everywhere in the early church—just as warm and just as expressive among these probably less cultured ones at Tyre, as it was with the elders of the church of Ephesus at Miletus. And we are glad to say that the household of faith today has many of the same characteristics of intense love for the brethren, even though they have not previously seen each other. We frequently think of this striking likeness when some of the friends, and sometimes their children, accompany us to the railway station to say "good-bye." Truly by one spirit we are all baptized into the one body, and whoever lacks this spirit of fellowship, of oneness, is quite likely to become more and more cool and indifferent, until he loses the truth entirely; and whoever cultivates this spirit of fellowship and love for all the members of the body of Christ will find it growing, intensifying.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

Mrs. M. J. Preston has put into poetic form the thought that we should speak our kind sentiments, and look them, and perform our kind services to one another, while we have the opportunity—and not let these opportunities go by, and leave our expressions until our friends are cold in death. She says:—

"What use for rope if it be not flung
Till the swimmer's grasp to the rock has clung?
What help in a comrade's bugle blast
When the peril of Alpine heights is past?
What need that the stirring pæon roll
When the runner is safe within the goal?
What worth is eulogy's blandest breath
When whispered in ears that are hushed in death?
No, no! if you have but a word of cheer
Speak it while I am alive to hear."

Leaving Tyre their vessel soon came to Ptolemais. There were a few friends at Ptolemis, and the day was spent in their company, and probably the partings again were full of expressions of sympathy; and then Cæsarea, the Roman capital of Palestine, was reached. Philip, the evangelist, one of the seven deacons originally appointed at Jerusalem, and who did a good work, it will be remembered, with the Ethiopian eunuch and at Samaria, was at this time apparently making Cæsarea his home. We have no definite statement respecting the number of believers at the place, but evidently most of these groups of the Lord's people were few in number. Five of the church, at least, were of Philip's own family, for he had four daughters, who are spoken of as unmarried sisters which did prophesy. It is difficult for us to determine whether or not they prophesied of future events, because this word "prophesy" is also used to designate public speaking without reference to foreseeing. Apparently the Apostle's company tarried more days at Cæsarea than they had intended, for finding that they would not be in time for the Passover the Apostle and his company were not in special haste to reach Jerusalem before the Pentecost season. It was while they tarried in the latter place that Agabus, a brother in the Lord, who had delivered important prophecies of future events, came to Cæsarea and finding Paul took his girdle and therewith bound his own feet and hands, and declared that thus Paul would be bound and delivered to the Gentiles. This form of prophecy, illustrating by signs, was not uncommon to the Jews. It will be remembered that Isaiah and Jeremiah and others of the prophets similarly acted out parts of their messages—thus, doubtless, making them more impressive.

This last testimony from Agabus seems to have affected all of Paul's companions who, taking a view similar to that taken by others, now joined in a general appeal to the Apostle not to go further on the journey—to give it up, not to run foolishly into danger. His reply shows us how thoroughly convinced he felt that it was the Lord's will, and that his dear friends were conscientious, he does not for an instant dispute. His words are most touching: "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?" Here again we are reminded of the words of the poet:—

"We share our mutual woes;
Our mutual burdens bear;
And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear."

But the Apostle was firm. He had not started on this journey without the full conviction and assurance that it was in the Lord's providence that he should take it; and he was not to be daunted by any of the circumstances that might arise. He well knew that all the powers of darkness would assail him in vain, except as the Lord should permit, and he well knew also that the Lord would permit nothing to occur that would be to his real advantage. He would, therefore, go on conscientiously and courageously, and finish the work that the Father had given him to do. He would be sustained by his faith in the divine supervision of all his affairs, just as our Lord Jesus was; who, we remember, said to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."—John 19:11.

There are few such noble characters as Paul's, unmoved by threats or fears, strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, and ready not only to be bound for Christ's sake, but to die, if such should be the arrangement of the Lord's providence on his behalf. Let us each and all emulate this noble example of one who followed so closely in the footsteps of our Lord and Master. Let us be strong, not only in our consecration, but also in the taking of all the steps that the Lord's providence may lead us to take.

The Apostle's argument was successful. He infused new courage into the hearts of his colaborers, and they apparently resolved that if he were about to die or suffer they, too, would rejoice if the will of God respecting them eventuated in their death; and if they did not suffer personally they would, at least, have the honor of being companions of those who were misused for Christ's sake, and thus be to some extent the sharers in the blessing promised. (Heb. 10:32, 33) The Apostle's companions saw the matter as he did, that it was the Lord's will; and they resolved to bow to it, notwithstanding that the Lord had given them information in advance which would have permitted them to turn back, or seek to save their lives. There is a very valuable lesson for all of the Lord's dear people in this word, "The will of the Lord be done." We should each seek to know the will of the Lord. If first of all our consecration be complete, even unto death, it will mean that we are seeking to know what the will of the Lord is respecting us, and it will mean that as we learn his will we will do it at any cost. It will mean that we will be on the outlook for the Lord's providences in all of our affairs, realizing that nothing happens by chance to those who are in covenant relationship with God, as members of the body of Christ,—that all things must work together for good to them. A fuller realization of the divine care over the elect would, doubtless, often guide our steps aright by directing the eye of faith to expect the Lord's leadings and to look for them in all matters that are of any importance.

AN INTERESTING LETTER

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

In the late fall of 1899 a young woman stopped in my house long enough to sell my wife a Volume I., M. DAWN, for which she was canvassing. My wife, being of the Roman Catholic faith, hesitated to read the book, and, knowing my irreligious disposition, feared to inform me of her purchase, thinking I might ridicule her action; so the book lay untouched for some months. After Christmas my wife, while engaged in making up a parcel for my relatives in a distant city, bethought herself of the book and an easy way to dispose of it, by sending to my grandmother, and thus also relieve herself one of the perplexities of Christmas giving, the religious nature of the book appealing to her idea of an aged person's disposition. I came into the room at this juncture, and, noticing the book, questioned her concerning it. On learning her intention, I explained to her the conception she had of my grandparent's disposition was erroneous, and that, instead of appreciating the gift, an opposite effect would be the case, as, to one of the old lady's temperament, it would imply that as she was now in the evening of life we felt it were best for her to prepare for the end by becoming religious. My wife saw the point, and the book was not sent, its pretty cover alone saving it from destruction as useless.

During the long winter evenings, being a voracious bookworm and tiring of the mechanical and scientific works which were my usual bent, I took up the volume of DAWN, more out of curiosity and want of something else, apparently. On reading the preface I was very favorably impressed by the utter absence of the ego most authors infuse into this portion of a book, and naturally desired to read further in the writings of so unusual a person. My mind must have been in relation to the volume in about the same condition that a soft veinless piece of marble is to a sculptor, for each statement left an impression, each opposing thought being readily and reasonably answered and dispelled. I read on long past the usual hour for retiring, not heeding repeated admonitions from my wife that I would be late to work next morning. This continued each evening as opportunity offered, taking up each volume, (having meantime procured the same), to the entire neglect of my usual studies, and becoming more deeply impressed and enlightened as I progressed. It was truly a coming "out of darkness into his marvelous light," and the thoughts and feelings inspired in me by the reading of these volumes cannot be described; they are beyond words. It was all so grand, so reasonable, so completely filling my heart with love for the great One who alone could devise such a wonderful plan; it was so natural to believe these writings, and in all my studies from Vol. I. to V. not once did a serious doubt arise in my mind but that each statement was absolutely true, for the God of the writer was different from the horrid monster my childhood's

teachers had told me of, who could torment eternally those he loved, and was otherwise so contrary and inconsistent.

Meanwhile Satan had endeavored to draw me aside and, by the conciliatory efforts of a Roman Catholic clergyman, to induce me to join myself to that faith, as well as the promise of family peace and worldly prosperity, lure me from the high calling toward which I was progressing. But I can with much fervor thank my heavenly Father that I had read enough from M. DAWN, as well as some timely advice from yourself, to be ably fortified against Satan's advances, and, with the "spirit of a sound mind," I could combat his sophistry. Now, since the light has become brighter to me, I can clearly see that God's overruling power was exerted in every instance just where I could not help myself further, and would have fallen but for his aid. Praises to his love!

Of course I could no more keep to myself these glorious tidings than a freshly opened bottle could retain the effervescent liquor that fills it. I must tell some one, and, as my dear wife not only refused to listen but opposed me, I had to try elsewhere. In a fellow-employee, Sister Kestner, I found a ready listener, and the volumes sold to me were of double service, for her experience was but a repetition of my own. Each now was alert to spread to others the knowledge we enjoyed. Brother Bird we found hungering and thirsting after righteousness and we proceeded to cooperate in filling him, while he, on imparting to his sister Mary what he had learned, was surprised to find that she had a set of the DAWNS, but being somewhat bound by sectarianism had not as yet mustered sufficient courage to make a bold stand for the truth and put into practice the suggestion of complete independence pointed out to present day footstep followers of Jesus as scriptural and necessary.

Sister Grebe became a fellow-employee, and it was but a short time till Sister Kestner had succeeded in bringing her into a study of God's Word as made clear by the DAWNS. We five, now all fully consecrated to God, and having publicly signified such fact by water baptism, acknowledging no head but Jesus, are gladly working in his harvest field at whatsoever our hands find to do under his guidance; and we can with certainly attest that having tasted and seen that God is good, there is no peace or blessedness except in him; and within sound of our Shepherd's voice there is only gladness.

We have another young student with us now, and we six have been banded together in the volunteer work this year. God's blessing has been with us and we have succeeded in reaching all the churches assigned to us, 62 in all, as well as giving our help in other parts of the city after our district was finished. We have received abundant evidence of our Master's kind approval of our feeble efforts to spread the glorious message of our Redeemer's second presence and to call his little ones out of Babylon, by the growth in Christian characteristics of love and forbearance, through the experiences while serving the brethren, also in the occasional permission to view some of the good results of our labors.

By the gracious permission of our heavenly Father we were last summer enabled to inaugurate mid-week meetings at my residence (we being so situated that it is not possible to attend the uptown meetings except on Sundays). Each one of our little class can testify to the wonderful help we receive in our daily walk up the narrow way, as a result of following the kindly suggestions which are given in the WATCH TOWER, and it is a sore trial if one of our number misses a meeting.

I close with a prayer for God's blessing on your every effort, through our blessed Redeemer's name.

Yours in Christ, JAMES LOCKWOOD.—*Missouri.*

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

AN ASTROLOGER'S OUTLOOK

We seriously question all the claims of Astrology; yet the following—from whatever source the suggestions come, even though of the adversary himself—seem remarkably true to our expectations based upon the Word of the Lord. For this reason alone we present them here,—as follows:—

"Saturn is the representative of the great motive power that has dominated the mind of man up to the present time. The great organizations of Capital, attracting now so much attention, are in reality the last great struggle of this Saturn-god to save his throne. But his efforts will be futile, yet far from useless, for he is blindly doing service for a still greater God in the same way as the other planets have contributed blindly to Saturn's glory.

"Jupiter, representing law, religion and morality, has been perforce subservient to Saturn's greater and more potent force. It explains why the church, the law, the charitable and educational institutions have contributed to increasing the power and prestige of the worldly and material Saturn, whose selfish monopolizing material nature must be disposed of and made tributary to a higher, nobler force that will carry out the work of human evolution.

"Jupiter must also transfer his allegiance from the grasping Saturn to the newly discovered factor that stands for universal brotherhood; namely, Uranus. When Uranus and Jupiter meet in the humane sign of Aquarius in 1914, the long-promised era will have made a fair start in the work of setting man free to work out his own salvation, and will insure the ultimate realization of dreams and ideals of all poets and sages in history.

"Uranus is preparing the way for Neptune, who symbolizes Love in its very highest form—the fulfilling of the law. By this, we see that Socialism, or whatever the new order may be called, will not and can not be the rule of the common or ignorant masses but the leadership of the very highest developed members of the human family.

"In 1903 Jupiter will be in the Sign of Pisces—sign of the feet, or understanding, and the synthesis of the new religion is Love;—Love that words cannot define. We are nearing a condition where "masters" will be unknown—where humanity will instinctively conform to the injunction, 'Call no man master, neither be ye called master.'

"Note—Uranus: Great commotions are expected when it shall take its ascendancy over Saturn."

PREPARATIONS FOR THE MILLENNIUM

Polar ice, both arctic and antarctic, seems to have been steadily decreasing, and it may be that these frigid deserts shall once blossom as the rose—Isa. 35:1—literally.

The ice from both poles seems to be drifting toward equatorial regions, to such an extent that, in the north, it has become a menace to commerce, and it may be a work preparatory to the "times of restitution."

ARCTIC ICE A MENACE TO OCEAN STEAMSHIPS

"Philadelphia, March 18.—(Press dispatch.)—Navigators of the North Atlantic are worried about the manner in which the artic floe ice is drifting south, directly in the pathway of steamships. Captain Beavis of the Philadelphia Trans-Atlantic line steamship East Point, which arrived here today from London reports passing tremendous quantities of field ice in latitude 43 deg. 43 min., and longitude 49 deg. 21 min. Owing to the obstruction Captain Beavis found it necessary to alter his vessel's course and steam 60 miles to the southward to avoid contact with it."

ONLY A FORM OF GODLINESS

Rev. J. B. Hastings, D. D., of Edinburgh, Scotland, explained not long ago his views respecting the generally acknowleded loss of religious interest, as follows:—

"Our worship in many cases has become a mere form. There is little apparent hungering for the bread of life; and only in rarest instances a crying out of the heart and flesh for the living God. Not that there is an open antagonism to religion. There have been periods within our own recollection when there was much more of direct opposition. But there is an alarming deal of that subtler, deadlier quantity known as simple indifference, which is playing melancholy havoc among ever-enlarging sections of the population. Outside our churches there is a great army of men and women who have become sadly estranged; who have been so long away from the ordinances of public worship that it will be next to impossible, by ordinary methods, to bring them back. And inside our churches there are many who feel that something needs to be done to make our public worship more interesting and edifying and directly helpful to the religious life. . . . .

"I believe that the root of the whole matter lies in a widespread practical disbelief in the supernatural. There is no realization, on the part of the multitudes, of the spiritual world, and of the God with whom they have to do. There are so many interests in this material life that the things of the spirit are simply given the go-by. The whole atmosphere of God's house has become so foreign to the experience of their everyday lives, that they are no longer interested, and, as a matter of course,

have ceased to attend. It is sad to think that so many young men and women in our populous cities are in this position. With churches galore, of all sorts and conditions (in one of which they could surely find congenial worship), they are yet standing without, spiritual starvelngs, children merely of time, practical unbelievers in God and immortality, moving on their light-hearted way to the judgment throne and the eternity beyond."

PECULIAR VIEWS ON HEATHENS

"Munich.—(Press cable.)—The papal nuncio at this court has ordered the Catholic papers to stop publishing an open letter by Bishop Pelkman, Lahore, East India, as it would 'distress the holy father very much to see the right reverend gentleman's peculiar views in print.'

"The paragraph in the bishop's letter to which exception is taken reads as follows:

" 'Twenty-one thousand three hundred and eighty-nine persons have died of the plague; wonderful are God's ways! One is almost persuaded to think that the Lord sentenced the heathen adults to die that their children might fall into the hands of the missionaries and be educated as good Christians. The last two famine periods brought us several thousand new adepts.' "

THE ATLANTA CONVENTION

This Convention was, we feel sure, a great blessing to many. One dear old brother, when bidding the Editor "Goodbye" at the train, said, "This Convention has been a blessing to me: I am a poor man, Brother Russell, but if it had cost me $1000 to attend I would not begrudge it." All faces told much the same story of appreciation of brotherly fellowship. We trust that the result will be permanently beneficial, not only to those who attended, but also to those at their homes whom they represented, and to whom they carried back some of the Convention's fullness of joy.

The attendance from outside Atlanta was good, especially for the South,—about 100. The largest attendance was on Sunday afternoon, when about 600 were present at the Grand Opera House. Nineteen symbolized their immersion into Christ.

A SEASONABLE WORD ON CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

FROM BRO. W. E. PAGE.

Dear Brother Russell:—Meeting so much "Christian Science" out this way, I was led to investigate the basis of its claims by the lamp of the Word, and I find it a most noxious weed. First, for my own profit, I wrote out what I found, and have since remodeled and chiseled it down. You may find good use for it as it is, or can use it as a foundation for a criticism in the TOWER upon this most manifest perversion. I send it to you for such use as you deem best. Put it in the waste basket if that is the best place for it, and do not hesitate a moment to tell me so, if these articles bother more than they help. I only want to do good work, but with our weak judgments we cannot always discern where we help and where we hinder.

The Lord is gracious to us, bearing with us in our infirmities, and ever and anon giving deep draughts at the fountain of truth. and its blessings of peace and love in justification. Oh, that this year may prove the one of most sincere consecration and abundant zeal to us all, who are of this way!

May grace and mercy and peace be multiplied to you and your household, and brethren and sisters with you.

Yours in fellowship, W. E. PAGE.

When presenting various features of the Father's great "Plan of the Ages," we have not infrequently met professed believers in Christ who seemed to accept the truth, and apparently warranted expectations of full fellowship. However, as the acquaintance grew, an almost indefinable barrier to communion would arise; and being anxious to receive those whom the Lord sends (Matt. 10:40). and desiring to esteem all professed brethren as most worthy (Phil. 2:3), we have often been perplexed and in straits as to what course we should pursue in our association with them. The grounds of the older sects are so well defined that we have but little difficulty in understanding our proper attitude toward them; nor is there particular danger of confusion from those forms of error which plainly and fairly present their teachings in well defined terms. Since our eyes were anointed that we might understand present privileges and labors (Rev. 3:18), we have been most perplexed and confused by the newer forms of doctrine which, on investigation, we find deny the Lord that bought them (2 Pet. 2:1), while with much feigned reverence and humility they profess allegiance to him, thus falsely presenting themselves as angels of light—messengers of truth. (2 Cor. 11:13-15) However considerate we may desire to be, when we meet such false, seductive teaching; we must without strife and to the best of our ability unmask it (2 Tim. 2:24-26), and be careful neither in word nor deed to wish it God-speed (2 John 9-11) remembering that it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.—1 Cor. 4:2.

One of the most widespread of these later forms of subtle error that we must meet is "Christian Science."

Many of its votaries are kind, well-intentioned people, but they are completely blinded by the perversions of the system; and we believe that many such will gladly free themselves from this dominion of the devil, when the shackles of ignorance and prejudice, which now bind them, are stricken off in the advancing light of this dawning day. As our conclusions and the grounds for them must be of use to some others of the brethren who may be perplexed as to the proper attitude they should assume toward this heresy, we have decided, with the Lord's help, to present what we have found. Our quotations on the subject are wholly from the writings of Mrs. Eddy, who is the chief apostle of the various forms—which are legion—of this doctrine.

When setting forth to those entangled in this doctrine, our faith regarding the "restitution of all things," and God's wonderful plan for selecting the "Seed" which is to bless all nations, we almost invariably meet with the claim, "That is just what we believe; you must be a Scientist." The claim is so sincerely made that we are led to hope that we have met with another grain of wheat. To make sure of our ground, we present the ransom and its necessity, which seems to meet with their approval, yet from various remarks, especially those made in a general way, we are conscious of a vital disagreement, somewhere, on the fundamental principles of the Lord Jesus' work. A short investigation into Mrs. Eddy's work disclosed the cause for this, and developed the fact that her teachings are based upon *private meanings put upon words.* Hence, when we present our views to one of her followers, the words we employ do not convey our meaning to them, and until we learn this, and find out what interpretation they put upon our words, we are sorely perplexed. Mrs. Eddy very cunningly lays the foundation for her master-piece of word-jugglery as follows:—

"Aside from the opposition to what is new, the greatest difficulty in introducing our metaphysical system is to express metaphysics in physical terms and then be understood physically. *This difficulty is overcome by teaching the student the metaphysical meaning of terms in common use.*"

What a preparation to deceive! Surely any teaching that must rest on special meanings placed on "terms in common use," should arouse the suspicions of those who are sincere and pure in heart. The Master did not find it necessary to employ so questionable a course, but so taught that the "common people heard him gladly."

In examining Mrs. Eddy's teachings, we do not follow the order of her books, but take up the essential truths she perverts, as seems best. Among Webster's definitions of *person* we find, "A self-conscious being;" and *being* is defined as "existence, opposed to nonexistence; that which exists in any way, whether it be material or spiritual;" and we submit that the universally accepted meaning of *person* today is a "self-conscious being." Again, we submit that to the unprejudiced and candid reader the unqualified teaching of the Bible, in language in common use, is that God is *the* great and only self-existent, "self-conscious being."

But Mrs. Eddy says, "Jehovah is not a person. God is principle." How elusive and vague this is! The first meaning in Webster given to *principle,* and which is marked obsolete and rare, is, "beginning, commencement;" second, "hence, a source, or origin; that from which anything proceeds; fundamental substance or energy;" and third, "an original faculty or endowment of the soul." Ah, yes! "The serpent was more subtle than all the beasts of the field." (Gen. 3:1) How this cunningly-laid perversion illustrates his full subtlety! While we stand aghast at the bold belittling of the great Jehovah, we cannot but wonder at the consummate skill shown. (Read Ezekiel 28:12-19) We know that God is *the* source of all good things: he from whom every right thing proceeds: the self-existent, "self-conscious being," possessing and originating all qualities of moral perfection. Owing to the inexactness of language, the wedge of error here introduced, (if, as common people, we follow Webster) is very slim, and not readily detected at first glance. If not detected, the next step will entangle the unwary very seriously. To the alert, however, the danger is not so great as it seems; for Mrs. Eddy does not accept the common meaning of the word *principle,* but proceeds to put a

private interpretation upon it. Following her statement regarding Jehovah, she defines *principle* as, "life, truth, love, substance and intelligence." These (in language in common use) are all qualities or attributes of beings; and thus God is reduced to the position of the sum of certain qualities of conscious existence, and is dethroned from his rightful position as the Creator of all these qualities. Those misled by these teachings are speedily so befogged that they are utterly unable to discern between honest treatment of the Scriptures and this woeful perversion of them.

Having dethroned God, the next natural step is the deification of man; and this work these teachings do in a less subtle form, and in one more easily followed, although the word-twisting is dexterously kept up. Webster defines *entity* as a "real being, whether in thought or in fact being, essence, existence." Mrs. Eddy says, "*Entity* signifies the particular nature of being; and *God, without the image and likeness of himself,* NAMED MAN, would be nonentity"—without existence. Following this we give from her book a series of quotations deifying man.

"God cannot destroy man, because he is the reflection of God." "The science of being reveals man perfect, even as the Father is perfect." "If man went out for a single instant in death, or sprang from nothingness into existence, there was an instant some time without man, when Jehovah was without entity, and there was no reflection of Mind, or Soul, and Principle had no idea." "God, Soul, is and was, and ever will be; and man is coexistent and eternal with this Soul." "The science of man, understood, would have eradicated sin, sickness and death in a less period than six thousand years."

Surely pride and boastfulness could assume no more than is here claimed. None of the "meek" would arrogate such position and virtue to themselves. To show the foolishness and the fruit of such exaltation of man, we quote the following:—

Man is "the infinite idea of infinite Spirit, . . . the spiritual image and likeness of God, ... the full representation of Mind; hence, the idea of Principle, not person. [Man is] the compound idea of God, including all other ideas, the generic term for all that reflects God's image and likeness. . . . . Woman is the highest term for man. . . . . [Man is] the conscious identity of being as found in Science, where man is the reflection of God, Mind, and, therefore, is eternal; that, which hath no separate mind from God; that which hath not a single quality underived from Deity; that possesses no life, intelligence, or creative power of his own, but reflects all that belongs to his Maker."

"'And God said let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth' (Gen. 1:26) —what is incapable of sin, sickness and death, in so much as it derives its *esse* from God, and possesses not a single original, or underived power: hence, cannot depart from holiness. Nor can God from out himself, whence man was evolved, engender a capacity or freedom to sin. *In divine science God and man are inseparable, as* PRINCIPLE AND ITS IDEA."

Of course the enthronement of man necessitates a perversion of the entire Scripture teaching regarding his creation and fall. To allay the suspicions that might arise if this work were too abruptly done, the approach is very gradually made, and the error introduced under high pretentions to spirituality and learning. As a sample we quote the following:—

"As crude forms of mortal mind yield to higher significations, the methaphysical Genesis of the Scripture will be hailed with head and heart. The following brief comments are the spiritual, or scientific, version of the text."

Space forbids full quotation, and we simply give the "spiritual, or scientific, version" of the fall, set forth by Mrs. Eddy as the true meaning of the account in Genesis 3:1-5, as follows:—

"The serpent is introduced into the Scriptural record without any specified origin; but some maintain he was a veritable demon, even the climax of subtlety and falsehood, created by a perfect and divine spirit. . . . . Adam, or error, even the belief of mind in matter, began this reign of mortal man somewhat mildly, increasing in jealousy and falsehood until his days were numbered by the law of truth, and the mortality of error made manifest. The garden was a term used to signify the body, in the first records of Mythology; sexuality and self-abuse the forbidden knowledge. Man was not to presume upon the prerogatives of his Creator, but to recognize God, the Father and Mother of us all.—Compare with Genesis 3:4, 5.

"This Allegory represents error in every one of its beliefs, always asserting itself as Truth and over Truth: and giving the lie to Truth, saying, I can open your eyes, I can do more for you than God (good) has done. Bow down to me, have other gods, admit I am right, and more real to the senses, pleasant to the eyes and more to be desired than Truth. The history of Adam, or error, is a dream without a dreamer; first, a supposition of assertion; secondly, that nothing says, I am something; and third, that something springs from nothing, and is life, substance and intelligence. The order of the allegory describing the mythological creation, even a creation springing from dust instead of Deity, is maintained in about this form. Mortal man, starting from chaos, or old night, from the lowest propensities; non-intelligence becoming intelligence; the basal portions of its formations of mind indicating the appetites and passions; its upper portions the sentiments, implying the hope that mind will sometime escape from matter, giving a material sense of things as the sense of mind, and matter having dominion over mind: body originating in non-intelligence, and mind afterward inserted, the creation a propagating principle in vegetable and animal, *alias* God in matter, or matter without God: a man's life consisting of the things that he eateth, and having no connection with God, Spirit; his senses unable to perceive Spirit, and matter dooming them to die. This mythological history of man, so unlike the scientific record of man as the image and likeness of God, having dominion over the earth, and whose Mother is Spirit, first creates man of dust, and without a Mother, afterwards giving him a Mother, who is governed by mesmerism, controlled by a belief called serpent, her origin a rib, her capacity for knowledge gathered through material sense and from the tree of knowledge, whereof if a man eat he shall die, and her progeny, self-constituted suicides, hastening toward death in pursuit of life. The word Adam, divided into two syllables and reading A-damn, indicates more closely the character and the curse of the divine spirit, or Mother of man bestowed upon it."

The fall being "spiritualized" out of existence, and man being "perfect even as the Father," there is no necessity for a man, Christ Jesus, to give his "life," a ransom—a corresponding price—"for the life of the world," and to redeem the race with his precious blood. Hence, Christ Jesus, the Anointed Savior, simply becomes a fine example, a "good man." We quote again from Mrs. Eddy:—

"Jesus was the son of a virgin mother by whom scientific being was so far understood that she knew that God was the Father of man, and man the offspring of a divine Principle. Jesus was the name of the man, and Christ but another name for God, the Principle and creator of that man. The signification of God being 'good' (?), the term Christ Jesus may be rendered as good man, or God-man."

Christ not being a ransom-sacrifice, no atonement work was done by him, and a new signification must be found for the Scripture teaching that he is the "propitiation [satisfaction] for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2) To keep the case clearly before us we will give Webster's definition of *atonement,* and then its "spiritual" signification as given by Mrs. Eddy.

"*Atonement* (Webster): Reconciliation after enmity or controversy. Satisfaction or reparation made by giving an equivalent for an injury."

"*Atonement* (Mrs. Eddy): The teachings, demonstrations and sufferings of the man Jesus, when *showing* mortals the way of salvation from sin, sickness and death. . . . . Soul's triumph over material sense. The supremacy of spirit over material sense. The supremacy of spirit asserted, man reassuming the image and likeness of God in his scientific atonement with him. Jesus of Nazareth gave the all-important proof that when God is understood, it will be seen that Soul creates its own body, and cannot for the smallest instant do without a body. This divine Science overcame death and the grave, and was Jesus' final demonstration that the body is the same after as before death: hence, there is a state of probation and progress, whereby to grow out of a material and into the spiritual sense of existence beyond the grave. The meek, mighty Nazarene exhibited a material body after crucifixion, to show his followers the great need there is of spiritualizing thought and action to make man God-like before death, that after it he may be fit for the higher school of the just made perfect. Not death, but the understanding of Life, God, spiritualizes man, and determines forever his progress and the state of his body. Mortality disappearing and immortality coming to life. Self-abnegation and love blessing its enemies. Not blood flowing from the veins of Jesus, but his out-flowing sense of life, truth and love, so much higher, purer and more God-like than mankind's, shedding its hallowed influence on the whole human race and marking out the only way to heaven. Not the death of the cross, but the crossbearing deathless life, that Jesus left for the example of mankind, ransoms from sin all who follow it."

Salvation from the present "evil world" Mrs. Eddy thus makes a matter of works, and is not through faith in Jesus, as taught by the apostles. Thus the adversary again undertakes to set forth "another gospel, which is not another."—Gal. 1.8, 9. Again she says:—

"The way is strait and narrow that leads to the understand-

ing that God is life. It is warfare with the flesh whereby *we conquer* sin, sickness and death, now or hereafter; but certainly before we can reach the goal of Spirit or Life, which is God. The truth of man makes a new creature. Old things have passed away, behold all things become new. Passions, selfish appetites and every sensuality yield to spirituality, and the balance of being is on the side of God. Christian perfection is *won* on no other basis. The scientific unity between God and man must be *wrought out in demonstration.*"

Man being "coexistent and co-eternal with God," death must be an illusion, and is so set forth:—

"Death: an illusion; there is no death. Matter has no life, hence, it cannot die, and mind is immortal. The flesh warring against spirit frets itself free from one belief only to be fettered by some other one, until all belief yields to the understanding of God. Any material evidence of death is false, for it contradicts the spiritual facts of life. The unreal and untrue. The opposite of God, or life."

The fall and death being done away with, there cannot, of course, be any resurrection from among the dead, or raising of the race up to something lost in Adam. Hence, in this new "Science" resurrection becomes mere development. We quote her definition or resurrection as follows:—

"Resurrection: spiritualization of thought; a new and higher idea of immortality, or spiritual existence. Material belief yielding to spiritual understanding."

Those taught of God can have no difficulty in tracing the sinuous course of that "old dragon," in these unstable and unlearned perversions of Scripture, which soon cause their teachers to become "raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame." Those who have watched the effect of these doctrines upon those proclaiming them readily discern that the "evil tree" is yielding its proper fruit.

Again, Mrs. Eddy sets forth her claimed many miracles of healing as the basis of her religion, and the proof of its divine origin. To those uninstructed in the way of truth, this claim is very weighty, and many are ensnared by it. These, seeing no wisdom in the permission of evil, and having no conception of the great things God has in store for those who, under the severest tests, maintain a love for righteousness and a hatred of wickedness, quickly fall in this evil day of subtle sophistries. Supposing "Godliness to be gain"; *i. e.*, a means to secure present temporal ease in finances or social life, freedom from aches and pains, etc., some, in their eagerness to escape from the hardship of enduring unfavorable conditions, are blinded to the opportunity for discipline thus offered, and rush headlong into any specious promise of relief that is made, without applying the rules and tests provided in the "sure word of prophecy," and are quickly ensnared by the adversary. Being one of the highest order of God's created beings, who wilfully left his first estate and does iniquity (Ezek. 28:12-15), the devil can loosen the bonds of suffering on those who give heed to his seductive teachings, until he gains full and complete control of their moral powers, and can thus use them as his pliant, even if unsuspecting, tools, simply releasing them temporarily to gain his own purposes. When these are served, or when the time for binding him has fully arrived (Rev. 20:2, 3), he will execute his full malignity, not only upon his own willing coadjutors, but also upon those who have been his dupes. We unhesitatingly brand this whole system of Christian Science, so-called, as another form of spiritualism put forth by the father of lies, who was a liar from the beginning. That there is a power, even superhuman, in it, we admit; but we believe it is the power of Satan, the great deceiver of men, which will be used only for the destruction of man.

[Satan's dominion is a dominion of death, and he undoubtedly has the power slightly to relieve the sick when his delusive purposes and doctrines would be best served thereby. (Heb. 2:14) The fact that Satan's kingdom and its methods are thus divided and in opposition—working evil, sin and death, as ever, and at the same time turning in to heal the sick in order the more securely to bind and blind his dupes in subtle errors—shows that the "god of this world" realizes that his reign of sin, ignorance, superstition and death is nearly at an end.—EDITOR.]

Let God's children beware lest they be entangled by this siren song. The system perverts everything it touches, and not even the Lord's prayer escapes its contamination. For the information of the brethren, we give the following "spiritualized" version of it:—

"Principle, eternal and harmonious,
Nameless and adorable intelligence,
Thou art ever present and supreme.
And when this Supremacy of Spirit
Shall appear, the dream of matter will disappear.
Give us the understanding of truth and love;
And loving we shall learn God,
And truth will destroy all error,
And lead us into the life, that is soul,
And deliver us from the errors of sense,
Sin, sickness and death.
For God is life, truth and love forever."

Trusting completely in our Lord, the Anointed Savior, who has bought us with his precious blood, we can quickly escape this evil, and enter into and retain a present rest in Christ, and be prepared for that perfect and everlasting rest that "remaineth for the people of God."—Heb. 4:9, 10; Isa. 26:3; Psa. 91.

A CHRISTIAN SCIENCE PRAYER

The *Insurance World* says:—"It seems almost incredible that the following formula called a prayer, repeated by a person sick of dyspepsia is alleged by Christian Scientists to have a curative effect. The exact words read:—

"'Shining and Glorious Verity, we recognize the great and splendid FACT that the moment we really believe the Truth, Disease ceases to trouble us; that the Truth is that there is no Disease in either real Body or Mind; that in the mind what *seems* to be a *disease* is a False Belief, a Parasite, a hateful Excrescence, and that what happens in the Body is the shadow of the LIE in the Soul. Lord help us to believe that All Evil is Utterly Unreal; that it is silly to be sick, absurd to be ailing, wicked to be wailing, atheism and denial of God to say, 'I am sick.' Help us to stoutly affirm with our hand in Your hand, with our eyes fixed on Thee, that we have no Dyspepsia, that we never had Dyspepsia, that we will never have Dyspepsia, that there is no such thing, that there never was any such thing, and that there never will be any such thing. Amen.'"

A UNITED PRESBYTERIAN VIEW

To what extent the adversary's messengers in garments of light can deceive, note the following by Rev. A. K. Duff, a U. P. minister, published without criticism in the *United Presbyterian.* He says:—

"In forming our judgment of Christian Science, the Savior's question will be suggestive, 'Think you that they are sinners above all others?' There is a basic principle of truth in the pope, faith cure, Christian Science, mind cure, osteopathy, etc., and only the wilfully blind, or unfair and dishonest writer will attempt to conceal it. If it were entirely false there could be no danger. To say that Christian Science is the work of the devil because it is a revival of black art, is all rot. It degrades the ministry in the eyes of well-thinking scholars of today that such utterances emanate from the pulpit. To assume that faith has no power in the healing of disease is to discredit a cardinal principle of the Gospel. Distinction against Christian Science must be finely woven, and in argument cautiously drawn out.

"This school of faith was organized in 1879 and now numbers 800 churches, 80 educational institutions, one million members and another million adherents. They have eight churches in New York city, and all are crowded Sabbath mornings and evenings. Last year they built one church in New York city costing $500,000, and every dime was raised before a pick was struck in the ground. This year they are building another in the same city, costing $600,000. They openly boast that they have no poor people, and we all know that hundreds of the ripest scholars in the lands are among them. College graduates, lawyers, physicians, popular authors and even clergymen join them.

"*Here is the leading error.* They say 'the Bible does not sanction physicians, nor recognize the beneficial effect of medicines,' when the opposite is true. 'They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick' is positive endorsement of medical treatment. The many references to the healing virtues of plants and herbs, the 'balm in Gilead and the physician there,' prove beyond a peradventure our practice of medicine."

* * *

Note the fact that these shepherds (preacher and editor) in Israel nominal are either ignorant of "the doctrines of Christ," "the faith once idelivered unto the saints," or else are blinded by the "dust" of falsities and meaningless language. Note the words—their "leading error" is the denial of physicians! How about their denial of sin,—of a fall,—of a redemption from sin and death by the precious blood of Christ;—their practical denial of God except as general and particular goodness or utility—as there is good or usefulness in a tree, in that it bears fruit or yields shade or can be used to construct a house?

These blinded men close their exhortation by implying that Christian Science would benefit all U. P's. and add,—

"I have studied them for five years, and I never found such a uniformly good people in my travels. They are purely Christ-like. They are all willing to endure stripes, and go naked and hungry, if by any means they may save some."

The befogged writer forgets, evidently, that in a previous

paragraph he has set forth "that they have no poor people." How, then, did this gentleman, after studying them for five years, learn about their willingness to endure hunger and nakedness on behalf of others? Their efforts have evidently been chiefly among the well-to-do; and thus they have avoided their burdens and been rather un-Christ-like.

Let us not be entrapped by Satan's deceptive garments of light intended to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Let us remember how our Lord associates his Word and doctrine with true discipleship, saying, "If any man will do his [the Father's] will, he shall know of the doctrine;" and again: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free;" and again: "If they speak not according to this Word [but handle the Word of God deceitfully] it is because there is no light in them."—John 7:17; 8:32; Isa. 8:20.

SUFFERING AS CHRISTIANS

ACTS 21:30-39.—MAY 3.

"If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed."—1 Pet. 4:16.

When the Apostle Paul and his companions arrived at Jerusalem they were cordially received by the brethren—they had further manifestations of the same loving brotherhood specially noted in our last lesson. The church was called together that the Apostle might make a general and public report, and might turn over to the proper authorities the funds donated for their poor by the churches amongst the Gentiles. Apparently several of the Apostles still resided at Jerusalem, "James, our Lord's brother," being in some particular sense the leader or chief spokesman. Tradition tells us that the different apostles ultimately scattered in different directions, preaching the Gospel—Andrew to Scythia, Jude to Assyria, Thomas to Persia and India, Peter to Babylon and Rome. We infer, however, that they had remained at Jerusalem up to this time, since Paul seems to have been the leader in the work amongst the Gentiles; quite probably his report of the Lord's blessing upon his efforts, in conjunction with the subsequent prescutions at Jerusalem, led the other apostles to go into foreign fields of service.

It was now but twelve years before the destruction of Jerusalem, and less than half that time before the beginning of the factionalism and anarchy which led up to that destruction The apostles quite probably in due time bethought themselves of the Lord's injunction that they must ultimately flee out of Jerusalem before it would be encompassed with armies and escape be impossible. We today are living within a corresponding twelve years of utter overthrow of churchianity, and must not be surprised if in the Lord's providence the bitterness and opposition against the present truth should become more and more open and violent, thus hindering our efforts amongst the professed people of God today, and compelling us to go more particularly to those who make less boast of their loyalty to God

The apostles and brethren at Jerusalem were fully in sympathy with the Apostle Paul, though evidently their minds did not grasp so clearly as did his the complete breaking down of "the middle wall of partition" which previously had separated Jews from Gentiles, nor did they appreciate so fully as he that the law was merely a pedagogue, a servant, to lead to Christ—to his school. Practically the Jerusalem friends said to the Apostle: We are in full accord with you and the noble work which you have been prosecuting, and we perceive the Lord's blessing upon it, and recognize the true Christian spirit in these brethren who have come with you, as representatives of the work of the Gospel amongst the Gentiles. However, you know how great is the opposition here; how bitter is the hatred of the Jews, and that they have heard of you. Jews who have come from Ephesus and Corinth and other places, evidently misunderstood some things that you taught there, or at least misrepresented your teachings. They have heard that you are an enemy of the law, while we know that you believe that "the law is just and holy and good," and full of shadows of better things to come. But now, as an offset to their pernicious presentations, and as an object lesson to some of our own brethren who are not just strong along this line, and for the benefit also of some whom we are endeavoring to interest in the Gospel of Christ, we have something to propose to you, and to these brethren: it is that you go into the Temple, as a worshiper, and associate yourselves with some of the rites and ceremonies there in progress, that thus all may know that you are not disrespectful toward Moses or the Law or the Temple,—that their misapprehension and evil-speaking may be counteracted. Amongst us are three brethren who have made certain vows to the Lord, called the vows of the Nazarites, and we suggest that you show your sympathy with them and their arrangements, acting as sponser for them—paying for their sacrifices which, according to the Law, they must offer, etc. Thus you will be seen with them, and in performance of certain ceremonies, for about a week, in the court of the Temple known as the Court of the Women, and we hope that much good will result therefrom, and much misapprehension be abated.

We can easily imagine that the bold champion of the truth in foreign lands would never have chosen such a course of his own volition, and that when the suggestion came to him it was not enthusiastically received. Neverthless, since it seemed to be the judgment of the apostles and brethren in general—seemed to be in their interest and according to their view of advantage to the general cause, the Apostle yielded his own preference. We cannot suppose that he yielded to that which was wrong, yet we can easily imagine some one inquiring, Would it not be sin for the Apostle or other Christians to participate in any measure in sacrifice in the Temple?—were not all these sacrifices done away in Christ, and henceforth abominations in the sight of God,—sacrilegious?

We answer, No, not at all. The sacrifices which pointed to Christ, and which he fulfilled, were no longer proper, but these sacrifices which the Nazarites offered in connection with their vows did not typify Christ's sacrifice, but rather the consecrations and devotions of the people, the antitypes of which will prevail during the Millennium. It was no sin, therefore, on the Apostle's part to join in this procedure, and yet we incline to doubt the wisdom of the course pursued. We incline to believe that it was rather a temporizing acknowledgment of the dignity of the Temple and its services; whereas by this time the real Temple and the real service had been inaugurated;—for the church itself is the antitypical Temple in which God has been present by his holy spirit since Pentecost. Although it is not distinctly so stated, we incline to believe that the Apostle Paul and all of his associates in this matter took a different view of it subsequently, as being a compromise which, without being sinful, was not advantageous, and reflected no special credit upon any connected with it. Perhaps such a lesson was needed by the apostles and the church at Jerusalem, that they might learn to be the more courageous in their presentations of the truth—that they might be less fearful of the Jews, more bold in their presentations of Christ and the New Covenant arrangements in his blood—the better sacrifices, better vows, etc.

It was while the Apostle and these brethren, who were really Jews by nature, but who saw beyond the types and symbols, and appreciated the antitypes, were engaged in the performance of the typical, or symbolical rites, that the Jews recognized Paul and one of his companions, and became furiously incensed, either believing or claiming to believe that the Apostle was attempting to do the very reverse of what he and the Jerusalem church intended—that he was attempting to discredit the Law and dishonor the Temple by violating, and getting others to violate, its holy precincts. As the excited shouts arose in the air a mob was quickly gathered; and as in Ephesus "the mob ran together, the greater part not knowing wherefore," so here again the mob merely knew that some of its leaders were frantically indignant at the Apostle Paul, and believed that he should be killed. He was dragged out of the Temple, and immediately the great doors of the Beautiful Gate of the Temple were closed—that no rioting or bloodshed might occur within the sacred enclosure.

The Tower of Antonia was close by the Temple Court, and steps connected the two. In this castle a band of Roman soldiers was quartered—evidently several hundred, because each centurion was a commander, or captain, of a hundred men. The riotous commotion brought forth the garrison, which appeared at just the proper time to deliver Paul from his enemies, who were beating him.

The chief captain, Claudius Lysias (Acts 23:26), caused the arrest of Paul and commanded that he be chained to two of the Roman soldiers—much after the manner in which now a culprit is sometimes handcuffed to an officer. Each Roman soldier carried, as a part of his outfit, an iron chain and a leather thong, for use in just such an emergency. While this handcuffing, which fulfilled the prophecy of Agabus, was in progress, Lysias made inquiry respecting the Apostle and the crime which had

occasioned the commotion and indignation of these religious people. As a Gentile, he would naturally suppose that such a commotion amongst religious worshipers must have been incited by some atrociously evil conduct, some villainy or sacrilege, or that a disguised robber or assassin had been discovered. The multitude shouted out its various conjectures, and, it being impossible to judge the case at the time on such evidence, he commanded that Paul be brought into the prison.

Lysias, the foreign officer, had probably a very imperfect knowledge of the language spoken by the Jews, which was either Hebrew or Syriac, his own language being the Greek. Knowing this, the Apostle spoke to him in the Greek language, and with such fluency as to cause the commander great surprise. From the account, he evidently had confounded the Apostle with an Egyptian leader of an insurrection of some time previous. Paul's request was that he be permitted to speak to the people, who were in such commotion and crying out, "Away with him!" He evidently thought that he might correct some false impressions and pacify the multitude. At any rate he would lose no opportunity for declaring the Gospel of Christ. The Lord influenced the heart of Lysias to grant the request. The people quieted as they perceived that the commander had permitted the prisoner to make them an address from the stairs leading to the castle. Here was a most excellent opportunity for presenting Christ before a large number of seemingly devout people—Temple worshipers. Undoubtedly there were some grains of "wheat" in that multitude, though evidently the great mass was "chaff." The Apostle's words would be a blessing to the wheat, and serve to test, prove, demonstrate, that the others were without the real kernel of truth in their hearts, although they had the outward appearances of being devout worshipers of the true God.

It is worthy of remark that the Apostle never allowed opportunities to pass by him without doing all in his power to use them in the Lord's praise and for the forwarding of the truth. The majority of us, probably, would have been so affected by the excitement of such an incident and by the bruises resulting from the beating, that we would perhaps have forgotten all about the greatest and most important work of all committed to our care, and might have been much less prompt than the Apostle to seek an opportunity to testify to the Lord's praise and for the opening of the eyes of any who might be his people amongst our assailants. Let us learn this lesson: let us be instant in season and out of season, so far as our own convenience and feelings are concerned, if only we can find opportune seasons for reaching others. The Apostle here illustrated his advice to Timothy, "Be instant in season and out of season,—preach the Word." It was in season for the multitude, because they were gathered there, and their attention was riveted upon him. Had he consulted his own convenience he would have said that it was very much "out of season" for himself;—that he was in no condition to speak, his nerves were excited and his body was bruised. But thinking of the convenient opportunity he spared not himself. In this he had the spirit of the Master, that he himself admonished us to have, saying that as Christ died for us we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren—in season or out of season, so far as our own convenience is concerned.

In a few well-chosen words he told the people the story of his own experience: he had, like themselves, been an opposer of Jesus, a persecutor of all the followers of the Lord; how he had been miraculously interrupted in this work, and led to consider the claims of Jesus from the standpoint of the Word of God—the law and the prophets; how he had become fully convinced that Jesus is indeed "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world," the deliverer who should come out of Zion, and through whom a blessing should come to all that would receive his message. He then proceeded to tell them what should have brought joy to their hearts; viz., that the Lord sent him to be a messenger to the Gentiles, to tell them of the good tidings, that they also might participate, as well as the Jews. But their hearts being evil and selfish, this mention of divine favor and mercy going to others incensed them; they heard the Apostle in peace and with profound attention up to this point, and then all their prejudices seemed to be aroused with the thought that this man claimed and taught that Gentiles could have favor with God equal to that bestowed upon the Jews. They cried out against him in much the same language that they had used against the Lord, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live;" and while they thus cried out and threw dust in the air, and gesticulated with their arms, and threw their garments about, they made a wild, weird picture. The Roman commander, not understanding the Hebrew language, had not been able to follow the Apostle's discourse, and considering it evident that after he had had so quiet and orderly a hearing for a time, and now there was such a wild burst of indignation at what he said, it implied something very deep and treacherous and evil in the man, else his words would not thus arouse the passions and malice of religious people. He, therefore, ordered the Apostle to be scourged to make him tell a true story of his differences with the Jews.

Matters are somewhat the same today, though on a different plane. A stranger or worldly person, hearing some sectarian Christian animadvert against some one who has been preaching the true Gospel of the Lord Jesus, would be inclined to suppose that the message must contain something very vicious, very terrible indeed, else it would not so arouse those who have outwardly so much "form of godliness." And if, as in the case of the Roman officer, an audience be granted, and the truth be presented in their hearing, they cannot understand it;—that is to say, "the world by wisdom knows not God," knows little of his plan, understands little of the language of his Word—it is a different language from that to which they are accustomed. And when, after a presentation of the truth, they find bitter opposition and invective against it on the part of religious teachers—modern scribes and Pharisees and doctors of divinity—we must not be surprised if they are the more inclined to side with those who represent popular theology—so-called "orthodoxy," and assume that the true Gospel, because believed and taught by so few and opposed by so many of influence, must necessarily be something very evil.

Nevertheless, it is for us to take the Apostle for our guide, and to be faithful in the use of every opportunity to let the light shine forth, even though it arouses the bitter opposition and persecution and prejudice of darkness. The darkness hateth the light, because it is reproved thereby, is our Lord's explanation. Nothing seemed so much to incite the Scribes and Pharisees of eighteen centuries ago as the reasonableness of the true gospel. The common people heard it gladly, unless intimidated by their religious rulers, and led to doubt those who had been teaching them to the contrary. Hence, the rulers were incensed against the gospellers: "They were grieved because they [the apostles] *taught* the *people*." They held, on the contrary, that only the scribes and Pharisees, the doctors and leaders, should be taught, and that the people should simply follow them blindly, and without requiring a reason and a "Thus saith the Lord" for their faith.

Our Golden Text for this lesson is well chosen. Paul's experience illustrated it; he was suffering as a Christian—because he was loyal to the Lord and his Word. He was not suffering because of having followed the admonitions of the brethren in going into the Temple, for very evidently the hatred that was against them in the hearts of his enemies would sooner or later have manifested itself anyway, and they would have sought his life, as on previous occasions. We merely see in this incident that the attempt of the apostles to create a favorable impression toward the Apostle Paul and his work amongst the Gentiles failed, and probably brought the matter of his arrest, etc., more quickly to the front than would any other course have done.

The Apostle was not ashamed of his sufferings, because he realized that they were endured for Christ's sake. Any man or woman would feel and should feel deeply pained at a public arrest and imprisonment as a felon, as a violator of the law. But when these things are experienced, and we can realize that they are coming to us because of our faithfulness to the Lord, in following in his footsteps, we may rejoice in ignominy, rejoice in things which otherwise would be shameful and detestable. If, therefore, in the Lord's providence, arrest or imprisonment or scourging should come to any who read this article, and if they can directly or indirectly trace their tribulation to faithfulness to the Lord and his truth, let them not be ashamed; let them glorify God on this behalf, rejoicing that they are accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ, and remembering that even thus also it was with our Lord Jesus. He was placed under arrest; he was bound; he was scourged; he was publicly insulted; he was even crucified as a blasphemer against God.—1 Pet. 4:16.

Another lesson which we may learn here is, not to trust too implicitly in the voice of the multitude, and if we find the rabble shouting against any one, either orally or through the press, we should not unquestioningly accept their verdict. We should remember the experiences of Jesus, the experiences of Paul, and of the other Apostles, and how the multitude cried out, "Away with them!" The Christian whose mind is thus relieved of prejudice is the better prepared to judge wisely respecting whatever may properly come under his observation or criticism. And then, if he have similar experiences himself, he will be the better prepared for them.

"THE LORD STOOD BY HIM"

ACTS 23:11-22.—MAY 10.

"The Lord stood by him and said, Be of good cheer."

After the exciting experiences of our last lesson the Apostle must have felt somewhat depressed in spirit and discouraged. True, he had passed through equally great trials amongst the Gentiles, but here, amongst his own people, and in the city of the Great King, the opposition to the Gospel would be much more inclined to make him heart-sore. Besides, he evidently had come to Jerusalem full of the thought that under the Lord's providence he might accomplish a considerable work amongst his kinsmen according to the flesh, and rescue some of them before the great overthrow which he realized was impending. It was in this time of great mental stress that the Lord so graciously communicated with him by a dream, as declared in the first verse of our lesson. What an encouragement it must have been! and the fact that it was given is an assurance that it was needed; for the Lord very rarely indeed interposes miraculously in the course of events unless there is special necessity. On two other occasions, when the Apostle was in straits, the Lord manifested his favor and encouraged him in like manner.—Acts 18:9, 10; 27:24.

How much the Apostle must have felt strengthened by this vision, and assurance of divine care, we can well imagine. Nevertheless, the Lord was as truly with him and as fully caring for his interests as on other occasions, when no vision attested the fact: and he is with us, his followers of today, in like manner; and doubtless the visions granted to the Apostle were destined of the Lord to be an encouragement for "all who should believe on him through their word." The Apostle's visions serve us as they served him—assuring us also that the Lord is with his people, and is able to care for and protect and guide and bless our efforts today, as eighteen centuries ago. But to have the Lord thus with him and to feel good cheer in the Lord's presence implied the fullest sincerity and zeal on the part of the Apostle to do and to be all that would please the Master; and similarly we can enjoy his presence and appropriate to ourselves the message, "Be of good cheer," only in proportion as our hearts can realize that, however imperfect our labors for the truth and for the brethren, they are done "as unto the Lord" and to the best of our ability.

The day before this vision, by order of the Roman commander, the Apostle was brought before the Jewish Sanhedrin, of which the high priest, Ananias, was president. The Apostle was permitted to address the Sanhedrin, and began by declaring himself a Jew, who had always lived in full harmony with the laws of his country—an honorable citizen. It was at this time, it will be remembered, the high priest, possibly thinking this language a reflection against himself (for he had an unsavory reputation), ordered an attendant to smite the Apostle on the mouth—an insult not at all uncommon in the East at that time, and, to some extent, even to this day. The Apostle, justly indignant, exclaimed, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall; for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" One who stood near him replied, "Answerest thou God's high priest so?" and the Apostle replied, "I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." It is uncertain what the Apostle meant by this language. It may be his defective eyesight did not recognize Ananias. Or, possibly, he meant to be understood as questioning the right of Ananias to the title of high priest. Or, in view of the fact that the antitypical high priest is the Lord Jesus, and that the typical priesthood came to an end at the time of Christ's glorification, the Apostle may have had that in mind. However, he acknowledged the teaching of the law in respect to the officers of the government, to render honor to whom honor is due; and there is a lesson here for all of us in this day, when we find so many disposed to "speak evil of dignitaries," and bring railing accusations against them. The attitude of the Lord's people should be a very conservative one in such matters—in harmony with Michael's words to the adversary, "The Lord rebuke thee!"

Reasoning that he would have scant courtesy from such a tribunal, and knowing that its members were about equally divided as between Pharisees and Sadducees, and that the high priest was a Sadducee, the Apostle appealed to the Pharisees that it was a case in which the Sadducees were trying to do him injury because of his religious faith, much of which was shared in by the Pharisees; and that a Sadducee, in violation of the Law, had just caused a Pharisee to be smitten in the mouth. He thus to some extent gained the sympathy of the Pharisees by declaring that he was a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, and that the real animus of the opposition against him was on the score of the resurrection of the dead—for the Pharisees believed in a resurrection of the dead, but the Sadducees denied it. Immediately there was a contention in the Sanhedrin, the Pharisee to some extent espousing the Apostle's cause, as against their adversaries, the Sadducees. The meeting broke up in disorder, the Roman commander, Lysias, rescuing Paul and removing him, and thus causing the excitement to abate.

The honesty and propriety of Paul's claim to be a Pharisee has been questioned by some, but we regard their contention as without foundation. The Apostle was a Jew; so were the Pharisees, and a Jew may have either more or less piety without its affecting his nationality. The Pharisees claimed to be strict believers of the Law of Moses—believers in all that Moses and the prophets did write, the name Pharisee signifying holiness or completeness in the observance of the law. Paul had all his life been zealous for the law of God and for its complete observance, and he was no less so as a Christian. Indeed, he was more so, for, having realized his own inability and the inability of all men to keep the law, he had laid hold upon Christ, the sent of God, as the one though whom alone he would be able to keep the law perfectly, wholly: as he expressed it, "The righteousness [the full, whole, complete meaning] of the law is fulfilled in us [holiness people, complete in Christ] who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." All true Christians today could make a similar claim to that of the Apostle—that we are Pharisees—holiness people—keepers of the divine law—observers of it in every particular to the extent of ability, and with all shortcomings and deficiences made up for us by our Lord Jesus. We are not under the Law Covenant, for it has given place to a better one, the original one; but as for the law itself, it is God's law, "holy, just, good," and can never pass away. It is recognized by us as much as it was recognized by the holiness people of old, and more so; for we discern, not only its letter, but its spirit—love for God and love for fellow-men.

The Jews must have realized that their case against the Apostle would appear very poorly in the eyes of the Roman commander, seeing that they were doing the rioting on both occasions, that the Apostle was the most sedate and willing to reason his cause, and that some of those supposed to be his accusers had turned to his defense. Meantime the sympathy of the Pharisees for Paul doubtless cooled off. At all events, during that night more than forty of the deluded religious enthusiasts bound themselves to God with a curse that they would kill Paul. Such an anathema was in effect, "May the divine curse be upon us if we do not effect the death of this man, whom we believe to be an enemy of God and of our religion, and whom we believe it to be our duty to destroy."

They laid a plot, as follows: They would have the high priest send word to the Roman commander that the Sanhedrin desired a fresh examination of the prisoner on some other charges, the intention being that while the soldiers would be bringing him these forty men would assault and risk their lives to assassinate Paul. The matter was evidently not kept as secretly as they supposed, for one of Paul's relatives learned the particulars. Indeed, we know that it is impossible to keep anything from God, and that the most secret engagements are, therefore, powerless to do injury to the Lord's people. Nevertheless, when the information reached the Apostle he did not say to himself, God knows all about this matter and will take care of me, and therefore, I have nothing to do in respect to it. On the contrary, he arranged matters so far as he could to defeat the plot—just as though the entire responsibility for his preservation rested upon himself. There is a lesson in this which many of God's dear people need to learn, viz., that each of the Lord's followers is a colaborer with the Lord in every good work. It is our duty to do all that we know how to do in proper self-defense and in protection of one another from the wiles of the adversary and in the defense of the cause we serve; but, having done all in our power, having exercised all the wisdom and prudence we can command, we are to rest our hearts in the knowledge that the Lord will take care of all that is beyond our power to control, so that all things shall work together for good to them that love God.

There is another lesson for us in the fact that, although the Lord promised Paul that, as he had been faithful in testifying of him at Jerusalem, he must also preach the Gospel at Rome, nevertheless this latter prediction was long deferred of realization. It was over two years before he reached Rome, and then as a prisoner. We also need certain lessons of faith. We not only need to believe that the Lord is with us, and has the care of our affairs, but have need of patience and perseverance in faith and hope and love; and ofttimes with us, as with the Apostle, the Lord defers for a long time to complete our deliverance from adverse conditions—defers for a long time the opening of the desired door of opportunity in his service. We are to remember his wisdom as well as his love and power, and to

rest contentedly therein after doing all within our power. In Paul's case it may be that conditions at Rome would be more favorable to his ministry later than they were at this time. It may be also that the Lord had a work for him to do in the interim as a prisoner at Cæsarea,—amongst the Romans. And so in our affairs: we are to look for the opportunities of service as they come, and leave to our Lord the supervision of our life as a whole.

As a result of the communication of the plot to the Roman captain, he sent the Apostle under a strong military escort to the Roman capital of Judea,—Cæsarea. There the Apostle, although kept a prisoner, was doubtless made comfortable, awaiting the trial before the Roman governor, Felix. The essence of this lesson as a whole, in its application to us, is expressed in the Apostle's words, "If God be for us who can be against us?" —Rom. 8:31.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

WHICH WERE THE MORE RESPONSIBLE; JUDAS OR ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA?

Question.—What difference should we recognize as between the condition of Judas Iscariot and his crime, and Ananias and Sapphira and their crime? The one sinned before the holy spirit was dispensed at Pentecost; the others subsequently. If Judas' case merited the verdict of second death, would not the others merit the same? If Ananias and Sapphira did not sin the sin unto death, how should we regard the case of Judas?

Answer.—There would appear to be considerable difference between these two cases. Both crimes were committed against much light; both were reprehensible; but that of Judas seems to us to be much the more serious of the two. While he lived prior to Pentecost, we are to remember that he was one of the twelve upon whom Jesus had specially conferred a measure of his spirit—such a measure as permitted him, with the others, to perform miracles of healing, casting out of devils, etc., as recorded. His position was one of special closeness to the Lord and his personal instruction, both by precept and example. We remember our Lord's words to the disciples, "To you it is *given to know* the mysteries of the kingdom; but to them that are without these things are spoken in parables." All this privilege, opportunity, knowledge, contact, made Judas specially responsible. Then, too, his crime would have been bad, wicked, had it been against any ordinary person; but was seriously intensified by being a crime against him who spake and acted as never man spake or acted before. It is from this standpoint that our Lord's declaration, that he was the son of perdition, seems to have special weight, or import, as implying that he had enjoyed a sufficiency of light and knowledge of righteousness to constitute a trial, and that his deliberate sin against such light and knowledge meant the second death.

In the case of Ananias and Sapphira they were beginners; they had not been long in the church; they never met the Master, and had not known the apostles a great while. They saw others consecrating their goods and noted that they were correspondingly appreciated in the church. They wished to have such an appreciation, and wished to do some good with their means; but a selfish feeling, combined, perhaps, with a feeling of caution, ensnared them into a wrong course of conduct which the Apostle Peter denominates "lying unto the holy spirit." We do not positively say that they will have any future or further opportunity for gaining everlasting life; we know of no Scripture which guarantees to us that they will have any such; yet it seems to us not improbable that they will have a further opportunity in which they will have greater light, and greater knowledge of right and wrong, and of the results attaching.

SHALL WE USE THE TERM "EVOLUTION," ETC.?

Question—I note your opposition to the evolution theory; yet in MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. I., page 31, you remark the possibility that something of an evolutionary development was used by our Creator in bringing the various species of animals each to its own perfection. Let me ask, then: Cannot we Christians hold to the word "evolution" with propriety? and may we not even think of Adam as having reached *human perfection* by a process of development as one of the species animal?

Answer—No; to both questions. We regard the words *Evolution* and *Evolutionist* as now definitely attached to a particular theory. These words belong wholly to those who invented and now have them, and we believe that, as Christians, we would do well to avoid them thoroughly, as the thought connected with the word is a mechanical one, pure and simple, as in opposition to a creative one. We would hold that God did develop different species, each to its perfection, and that he developed these, either by a long or a short process, from the earth itself; but we cannot admit, as evolutionists would claim, that this was merely a development which needed not the Lifegiver to start it, and to maintain and direct it. We would claim that God is the director of all the forces of nature, and that they are all of his own creation, and results, therefore, of his direct creation in every instance—fish, fowl, brute, man.

It would not strike us as reasonable to suppose a gradual development of a perfect man by an evolutionary process without his having some measure of responsibility added at some stage of his career before he reached perfection. Neither would it be reasonable to suppose the evolution of a man from a lower order of being to absolute perfection of his own kind, without a history, literature, etc., etc.; neither would it be reasonable to suppose a human being so evolved from a lower order of being to human perfection, as being in ignorance of good and evil up to the time that he reached perfection. If we who are in a fallen condition are held to be responsible to divine law, would not those of the human family who had not yet reached full perfection, but who had considerable intelligence, be reasonably amenable to law also?—supposing your theory to be true.

From whatever standpoint we would view the matter we can find no ground whatever for supposing that Adam ever had a human father, either perfect or imperfect in the flesh. Much more would we disbelieve that he ever had a father of a lower order of being, who could give him life in the divine likeness, in heart and head. Furthermore, to suppose such a possible evolution of a man to perfection from a condition of imperfection, would be to suppose that man, in the present-time imperfect condition, is his own savior, and could re-commence a process of evolution just as well as he could have carried on such a process before reaching perfection. If such a proposition should be considered true, it would negative all the Scriptural teachings we have respecting the necessity for a Redeemer and for his interference in order supernaturally to bring about times of restitution of all things.

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"LOOKING FOR THAT BLESSED HOPE"

"I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."—John 14:3.

What joyful hopes, what exuberant anticipations, cluster around this promise, in the hearts of the Lord's faithful! In a few words it sums up all the good things that God hath in reservation for them that love him. But not all mankind have such feelings in respect to this subject;—not all are aware of the gracious blessings held in store for the world, awaiting that auspicious time for their dissemination; and not all mankind are in such a condition of mind and heart as to be able, with joy, to anticipate meeting the Lord. We can readily surmise that not only a large proportion of nominal Christendom, but a comparatively large proportion of true Christians, are not living in that attitude of heart and daily life which would permit them to anticipate this meeting with sentiments of pleasure.

Not only do false doctrines hinder a joyful anticipation of this great event, but sin, likewise, hinders such joyful anticipation, induces shame and fear,—knowing that even those conditions of heart which may be hidden from fellow-servants cannot be hidden from the Master. We pray with the prophet, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults, keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins," and to the extent that this is the desire of our hearts, and the effort of our lives,—to the extent that the testimony of God's Word dwells in us rightly, and enables us to recognize the lengths and breadths of divine love and compassion covering unintentional shortcomings,—to this extent the Lord's faithful ones are able to rejoice in this promise, and to look forward with joy not only to the meeting with the Lord, but also to their abiding everlastingly in his presence and companionship. But to all others—to all who are not living up to their privileges as children of God and

joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord,—to all who are not seeking to walk circumspectly in the footsteps of Jesus, the words of the text come bringing only a measure of joy, a measure of hope, and not an exuberant overflow.

THEY KNEW NOT AND RECEIVED HIM NOT

Looking back to the harvest of the Jewish age, we readily perceive that the difficulty in the way of God's ancient people —the direct cause of their stumbling—lay in their failure to appreciate the fact that the coming of Messiah, for which they had so long waited and prayed, was a compound event, having its beginning in their day in the advent of Jesus in the flesh, and having its consummation now, in our day, in the advent of Jesus, a spirit being in glory. The prophecies do not clearly distinguish between the sufferings of Christ and the glory to follow; and it is not for us to blame unduly the poor Jews for seeing with hope and joy the ultimate blessings which Messiah would bring, and overlooking the trials, sufferings and death which must necessarily precede the glory. The Apostle assures us of their expectant attitude; saying, "Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God, hope to come."—Acts 26:7.

We inquire, Why were they permitted to stumble through the misconception of the prophecies? Why was it not explained to them clearly and definitely that the Messiah should first come as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, to be a sin-offering for the sins of the whole world; and that subsequently he would come as the King of Glory to deliver and bless the possession purchased with his own precious blood? We answer, Because the Lord did not wish to draw all Israel into the Gospel church. He wished to draw only a certain special class; hence, as the Prophet foretold, he spoke unto the people in parables and dark sayings, that hearing they might hear and not understand, and seeing they might see and yet not believe—lest they should receive Jesus, lest they should accept him as their King. God's dealings in this matter would be inscrutable, unjust, unloving, unfair, were the ordinary conception of his plan the correct one;—if, for instance, all those who rejected Jesus were to be sent to eternal torment.

But we have already seen that this was not a part of the divine plan, and that while only the elect class of Israel received the Lord, or were able to appreciate him and to accept his invitation, the remainder of that people were merely blinded, and that, as the Apostle tells us, for a time only,—until the elect class should be completed by selections from the Gentiles also, and then divine favor shall return to them, and all Israel shall be saved from that blindness which there came upon them. The eyes of their understanding shall be opened, and the Lord in glory, speaking to them at his second advent, will no longer hide his meaning under parables and dark sayings, but, on the contrary, shall cause the knowledge of the Lord to fill the whole earth, so that no man will need say unto his neighbor, Know the Lord—because all shall know him, from the least of them unto the greatest of them.—Jer. 31:34.

If such were God's dealings with the natural Israelites—if the matter of the sufferings and glory of Messiah, and the relationship of these two features of his coming were hidden from natural Israel, how has it been with nominal spiritual Israel—with those who from amongst the Gentiles have to some extent accepted God and Christ? Has this subject of the manifestation of Messiah been clearly discerned by nominal Christendom throughout this Gospel age? We answer, No; although the blindness to the subject is from a somewhat different standpoint. The Jews through their traditions were blinded to the sufferings of Christ, and looked only for the glorious empire which he would establish for the blessing of the world; while Christians, generally, see matters only from the reverse standpoint—see merely the first advent of Christ, its sufferings, the redemptive work, and fail to discern the kingdom and the blessing of all the families of the earth, which are to result from its establishment at the second coming of our Lord.

What is the source of this error, this blindness to the facts so clearly enunciated in prophecy, that the Apostle could declare that the times of restitution which shall come at the second coming of our Lord, had been "spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began"? Why do not Christians see this? We answer, Because they are blinded in the same sense that the Jews are blinded, although with a different form of blindness. But as the "Israelite indeed" amongst the Jews was not suffered to be blinded on the subject, but was clearly instructed by the Lord, guided into the truth, so that all the wheat of that nation were brought to a knowledge of Messiah, and only the chaffy element failed to discern him; so now, amongst the wheat and tares of this Gospel age we find the Scriptures clearly teaching that all who are of the wheat class will have the light of life; and all who are of the tare class will, just as surely, be left to grope and stumble in darkness, as did their prototype in the end of the Jewish age. Why? For the very same reason. Because the Lord is still seeking not for masses; not for numbers; but for peculiar characters—for those who are in heart-harmony with him;—for the pure in heart, in motive, in intention—the honest, the sincere. These will as surely be guided by the Lord into a knowledge and appreciation of the second advent of Messiah and of the kingdom glories, as were those of the similar class in the end of the Jewish age—even though, as in the case of Saul of Tarsus, it should be necessary to strike them down in the way with some exhibition, or demonstration, of the truth.

THE HIDDEN MYSTERY

There is a secret connected with this subject which the Apostle repeatedly calls the "Mystery" of God (Rom. 16:25, 26; Eph. 3:9; 5:32; Col. 1:26; Rev. 10:7) This mystery, as he explains, relates to the Gospel church;—the peculiar relationship between the Gospel church and its head and Lord is not intended to be understood by the world or by the nominal Christian nor by even the true Christian who is not in a proper attitude of heart and fully consecrated to the Lord.

When we catch a glimpse of this "mystery" it explains the whole situation. It shows us that from the divine standpoint, the promised Messiah, the Deliverer of the world from the bondage of sin and death—the Restorer, the great Prophet, Priest and King, whose Millennial reign as "the seed of Abraham" is to bring blessing to all the families of the earth —*is not our Lord Jesus alone*, but also with him, and under him as its head, the entire church of God—the faithful in Christ Jesus—the "little flock," whom God is selecting from amongst men during this Gospel age,—these, unitedly, are the Christ, the Messiah which God promised and is providing for the deliverance of the world.

Grasping this "mystery," it shows us that the first advent of Christ—in the flesh—for the suffering of death—has been in progress for nearly nineteen centuries. First came "the Lord Jesus, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," who was the forerunner; none could precede him, all who would be associated must be followers and under his control and direction for he is the "Head over all, God blessed forever." (Rom. 9:5) He learned certain lessons which would qualify him to be the great High Priest for the world, as the Apostle declares, "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."—Heb. 2:17.

Additionally, through the sacrifice of himself, this Chief of a royal priesthood *bought* the world, thus making possible the restitution of as many as will in due time receive the blessing of God at his hands, and at the same time making possible the invitation of some of them, some of the redeemed, to become joint-heirs with himself in his kingdom. But if it was necessary that the Head of the priesthood should be tested in all points, and should learn obedience by the things he suffered, it was certainly not less necessary that all who would be members of the kingdom class with him, after being redeemed by his precious blood, should be exercised, tried, tested, proven—"made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." So how plain it is, that the Head having been manifested in the flesh, seen of men, testified of angels, etc., all the members of his body should likewise be manifested in the flesh; because, as the Apostle declares,—"As he was, so are we in this world."—1 John 4:17.

Looked at from this standpoint, we see that the first advent of Christ—in the flesh—has been a gradual one, covering a period of nearly nineteen centuries. We see that the Master has acknowledged these members of his body, made them his ambassadors, and through them has borne witness to the world, and in their sufferings he has suffered; for, as the Apostle declares, "We fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (Col. 1:24) The Apostle Peter declares, that the prophets "spake of the sufferings of Christ [which, as we have seen, have extended over a period of nearly nineteen centuries] and of the glory that should follow"—as soon as the sufferings are completed. (1 Pet. 4:13) The sufferings evidently did not end at Calvary, else the glory would have begun long ago. The words of our text are in full harmony with this; for the Master addressed not the world, but this very class, his brethren, his church, the members of his body, "you." His declaration implies that when all of this "you" class shall have been found, tested, tried and approved —when the elect company shall be complete, the Head, who meantime passed into glory, will reappear to be then and ever

afterward associated with the members of his body in glory —"in power and great glory"—a spiritual company. And for what purpose?

We answer that God is "the same yesterday, today and forever"; and his plan is an unchangeable one; hence, all this preparation of the Messiah, head and body members, is part and parcel of the original plan. This implies that when this great Messiah, head and body, changed and glorified, no longer in the flesh, but in the spirit, no longer of human nature, but of divine nature shall be complete,—then shall come the time in which all the gracious promises of ancient times shall have fulfilment,—"times of restitution." Then Israel's blindness shall be turned away, and the blindness of the Gentiles also; for is it not written that "all the blind eyes shall see out of obscurity" and "all the deaf ears be unstopped," and that Satan, the god of this world, shall be bound, and deceive the nations no more? The Apostle declares that he has blinded the world; and doubtless Satan supposes that he is interfering with the divine plan; but behold, as the mists clear away, we perceive that the Almighty has made use of his unwitting servant, to keep secret the mystery which he did not intend should be understood except by the faithful, until the great day of revealing. Then the whole world, released from its bondage of ignorance, superstition and blindness, shall be again made to see, and assuredly many will shout for joy, "Glory to God in the highest,"—giving thanks for the gracious plan of God in which they will be participators, and which will be carried out through the agency of the glorified royal priesthood of which our Lord is the Head and Chief and Redeemer.

ERRORS BECLOUD TRUTHS

False doctrines have beclouded this subject of the second coming of the Lord in the minds of many. (1) First came the wrong thought that the church in its present condition, in the flesh, was to accomplish the promise of God made to Abraham,—to bless Israel and all the families of the earth. How false this conception! It is true that some blessing has followed the promulgation of the Gospel, even when sadly mixed with the traditions of men; it is true also that a measure of civilization and enlightenment has followed in the wake of the testimony of Jesus, even when uttered through imperfect lips and in distorted form; but this is not the blessing which God has promised; this is not the "restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets." In no sense of the word is it the blessing of all the families of the earth. At no time has even this measure of blessing reached more than a tithe of the living generations and nations—to say nothing of the generations of all nations which have passed into the great prison house of death. What a short-sighted interpretation it is that could apply to the church in its condition of humiliation, of the past nineteen centuries, all those glorious promises of power and glory and majesty, and earth-filling knowledge, and victory over evil, sin and ignorance, and Satan; and the blessing and uplifting of all mankind;—so clearly stated by all the holy prophets since the world began!

(2) Another false doctrine which has helped to becloud the minds of many is the theory that those who die *do not die,* but are, on the contrary, when dead, more alive than ever before—that they merely *seem* to die—that in reality they are in the moment of dying clothed upon with immortality, and as spirit beings, pass into an eternity of either bliss or torment. This unscriptural teaching makes void the Scriptural promise of a resurrection of the *dead* by claiming that *none are dead;* and it makes void also the lesson of our text and hundreds of others like it; for why should those who believe such things have any interest in such a promise as this text presents—"I will come again and receive you unto myself"?

In proportion as the doctrine of the second coming of Christ, and the resurrection of the dead then to take place, have been lost sight of from either of the above causes, in that same proportion blindness and darkness and lack of spiritual life have surely resulted. By the lack of spiritual life we do not mean lack of excitement, "revivals," "vanity fairs," "church work," etc.; but we do mean lack of piety, lack of deep Christian experience, lack of the fruits of the spirit and the joys thereof. And be it noted now, that those Christians who hold this hope of the second coming even though bound with various false doctrines, receive a blessing from it that is not fully counteracted by the false traditions of men which they have wrongly associated with it. Indeed, this must be true in respect to every feature of divine truth;—every item of it has its power as a sanctifying medium, as explained in our dear Redeemer's prayer—"Sanctify them through thy truth, thy Word is truth." Whoever has even one item of truth to nine items of error, has to the extent of that one item, a sanctifying power; whoever has five parts of truth and five parts of error has a considerable measure of sanctifying power; and whoever, by the grace of God, can get rid of all the error, will have the tenfold power of the truth working in him to will and to do God's good pleasure—sanctifying him.

These ten various points of truth are not alike powerful either, and amongst them all we know of none which has greater purifying influence than this one referred to in our text—"that blessed hope"—the appearing of our glorious Lord.

THIS HOPE PURIFIETH

"He who hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (1 John 3:3) He who has not this hope in him may purify himself in some measure from other motives, but is not at all likely to be purified to the same degree as he would be purified by this hope. Indeed we may be sure, on the other hand, that none but the pure in heart can honestly and truly entertain this hope; to the impure of heart it must rather be a dreadful thought that, shortly, he who can read the very thoughts and intents of the heart will be present; and that all shall appear before him—that all shall be open and naked before his sight. The illiterate and uncultured and morally impure would be sadly out of place if found in the midst of the pure, the noble, the refined, even for an evening; much more would the matter be distressful to them if the prospects were that they must be thus associated forever. And so it is with the immoral and impure of heart in respect to the second coming of our Lord, and the prospect that all the pure in heart shall be there with him,—the impure cannot covet a place in such a gathering, nor could they rejoice in the hope of such a companionship. Indeed the thought of such associations everlastingly would to such be unendurable.

When we speak of the pure in heart who alone can rejoice in this promise, we are not to be understood as meaning perfect men and women according to the flesh, in every word and act acceptable to the Lord. We have God's own assurance that there are none such—"There is none righteous, no not one"—all come short of the glory of God, the majority very far short. But the Lord knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust, that we were born in sin and shapen in iniquity, that all the children's teeth were set on edge by the sour grapes of sin of which our first parents partook. Those who rejoice in the promise of our text were "children of wrath even as others," and the difference now is that they have been reckonedly justified—their sins are covered by the merit of the great redemptive sacrifice, they have a new standing with the Lord as "new creatures"—not sinners, but friends—accepted in the Beloved; accepted not according to the flesh and its imperfections, but according to the new mind, the new heart, and its new divine aspirations and endeavors.

FEW KNOW OF OUR LORD'S PAROUSIA

Let us, dear brethren, keep well before our minds the Master's promised return, and now in the time of his *"parousia"* (invisible presence), let it have its full weight and influence upon our every word and act; yea, upon our very thoughts. Let the hope that we shall soon experience our resurrection change, and be made like our dear Redeemer, and see him as he is, and share his glory in the great *"epiphania,"* or shining forth of the sons of God in the glory of the kingdom, enthuse us;—let this energize our hearts, loose our lips, and strengthen us for every duty, privilege and opportunity—to serve our Master and the household of faith. If this hope has been an anchor to the Lord's people for so many centuries, how much more does it mean to us who are living now in the very time of his presence, waiting for his *"apokalupsis"*—his revealing in the glory of the kingdom!

It is only in accordance with what we have seen respecting the heavenly Father's dealings in the past, that we now perceive that there are various matters connected with our Lord's second advent which are inscrutable to the natural man, and can only be perceived by the faithful, and that under the guidance of the spirit in the understanding of the Word. As we saw previously that the Jews failed to grasp the facts connected with our Lord's presence at the first advent—except those who were Israelites indeed, and they but a handful in comparison with the nation,—so here, may we not expect that even amongst those who today are hoping for the Master's return, only a comparative remnant, a handful, will be in such a condition of heart as to permit them to discern clearly and distinctly the manner of the second advent? The presence of our Lord, invisible to men, is for the gathering of the wheat into his barn and the tares for burning; and, subsequently, the manifestation of the complete Christ, head and members,

in the glory of the kingdom, as the Sun of righteousness will be for the healing and blessing and restoring of all mankind then willing to accept the blessings of the Lord on the terms of righteousness.

THE MEMORIAL CELEBRATION

Good, heart-cheering reports are at hand from various quarters, showing that the Memorial Supper was this year an occasion of great interest and spiritual profit to the Lord's people scattered abroad. It surely grows in meaning to us as we grow in the knowledge of the divine plan, and as we come closer and closer into accord with the great Fount of every blessing.

Three hundred and thirty devoted souls gathered at the Bible House Chapel, Allegheny, and after a review of the meaning of the emblems, the bread and the cup, partook of them with hearts overflowing with gratitude (1) for the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation to God, already effected for all of the "church of the firstborn"; and (2) for the inestimable privilege of participating with our dear Redeemer as members or parts of the "one loaf"—the one body;—and as participators in the "one cup" of our Lord's sufferings, even unto death, as the Apostle explains. (1 Cor. 10:16, 17) Three baptism services witnessed to the consecration of eighteen, and made deep impressions upon those who had already witnessed the same good confession.

We have reports before us which indicate that a much larger number participated this year than ever previously. All report showers of refreshing. Some of the leading companies numbered as follows:—Boston, 142 communicants, 32 baptisms; Philadelphia, 130 communicants, 14 baptisms; Chicago, 125; New York, 71; Indianapolis, 80, immersions 11; Washington, D. C., 67; Toronto, Ont., 57; Cleveland, O., 54; Columbus, O., 25; Houston, Tex., 30; Toledo, O., 37; Richmond, Va., 35; Brantford, Ont., 28; Tiffin, O., 35; Atlanta, Ga., 22; Buffalo, 27; Cincinnati, 46; Baltimore, 26; Dayton, O., 32; Lynn, Mass., 27; Auburn, R. I., 35; Scranton, Pa., 33; Minneapolis and St. Paul, 37.

PAUL BEFORE FELIX

ACTS 24:10-16, 24-26.—MAY 17.

"I will fear no evil: for thou art with me."—Psa. 23:4.

Five days after Paul's arrival a prisoner at Cæsarea the chief priest, Ananias, accompanied by a public advocate and a deputation from the Sanhedrin, also appeared in the city to make charges against Paul, and the trial at once took place. The advocate, Tertullus, began his case by making very flattering allusions to the governor—very hypocritical allusions, as we know from secular histories of the time. "Both Josephus and Tacitus represent him as one of the most corrupt and oppressive rulers ever sent by the Romans into Judea."

Flattery of this kind, undeserved praise, is extremely reprehensible; totally contrary to the principles which govern the Lord's followers. It is dishonesty, hypocrisy. Nevertheless, flattery is a very powerful weapon, which the unregenerate have little scruple in using, and it frequently gives them a decided advantage in wordly affairs, in opposition to the Lord's faithful, who are restrained from such flatteries, being obliged to consider truth and honesty in all their words and dealings. Some of the Lord's people are, on the other hand, inclined to carry honesty in such matters to an extreme: many in Paul's stead would have felt it their bounden duty to have upbraided Felix roundly. It is no more obligatory upon the Lord's people to denounce every wrongdoer whom they may meet in the street than it is for them to tell all homely persons they may see of their lack along the lines of beauty. The Apostle's course in this case is an illustration of the possession of the spirit of a sound mind. When it came his turn to address the governor he neither upbraided nor reproved him, nor did he utter any words of flattery. The introduction to his defense was every word true in the fullest sense, and yet it was framed and presented in courteous and agreeable language.

Politeness is always a part of Christian character. In the world it may be polish, but in the Christian it is not merely a veneer, but represents the true sentiments of the heart, developed along the lines of the spirit of life—love. Love leads to gentleness, patience, kindness, etc., and even in the case of disobedience it will hesitate to utter an unkind word, and will avoid the same so far as duty will permit.

The advocate, or attorney, Tertullus, made serious charges against the Apostle. He would have him appear to Felix as more or less a conspirator against the Roman government—at least a raiser of tumults and seditions amongst the people. This charge was made broadly, applying not only to the present instance, the tumult at Jerusalem, but that everywhere, throughout the provinces of Rome, wherever he went, tumults arose amongst the people. It did not seem to occur to this attorney that the tumults might be caused by evil-doers in their endeavor to stop the progress of righteousness and truth; the thought he endeavored to present to Felix was that whoever occasioned tumults, regardless of his plea, was to be considered an enemy to good government, law and order. The same arguments are powerful today with those who do not appreciate the true principles of justice and liberty. It will not surprise us at all if by and by the enemies of present truth take a similarly unjust stand against us, who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of the Apostle—seeking to present the truths of a new dispensation to our brethren in Babylon, who are not only themselves unwilling to hear, but are easily aroused to anger, vituperation and persecution, that they may prevent others from receiving the good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people.

When the charges had been preferred, Paul was permitted to speak for himself, and did so to good effect. He showed (1) that he had but recently arrived in Jerusalem; that he had raised no riot or commotion, but that, on the contrary, at the time of his arrest he was quietly worshipping God in the Temple—disputing with nobody and interfering with nobody's rights. (2) He challenged his accusers to produce proofs of the truthfulness of their charges—denying their ability to prove them; and thus in a most reasonable and legal way showed that the burden of proof was upon his accusers, and not upon himself. (3) He did confess, however, that there was some ground for the animosity manifested against him, and this was that his fellow-Jews charged him with believing and teaching heresy—a split-off from the Jewish religion. It was his answer to the charge that he was a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes; he denied that it was heresy against the Jewish religion, and a sect, or split-off party. It was his enemies who called Christianity heresy, and separation from Judaism, but their charges were false from the Apostle's standpoint. Christianity, instead of being split off from Judaism, was the natural outcome and proper development of it—the fulfilment of the promises of God upon which the hopes and prospects of Judaism were all built. The Apostle shows this matter most distinctly in his letter to the Romans (chap. 11), where he pictures the Jewish nation as the olive tree whose root was the Abrahamic promise, and whose branches were the people of Israel. He does not picture Christianity as another tree, nor yet as a new shoot out of this original olive tree, but he does picture it as the fuller development of this tree, representing all Jews refusing to progress and to accept of Christ, as branches that were broken off—all the true Jews who continued to be recognized of the Lord,—all the Israelites indeed,—were the Christians who from Pentecost onward have been known as spiritual Israelites.

Progressing, the Apostle justified the claim which he made at his hearing before the Sanhedrin; viz., that a serious part of the objection raised against him by his countrymen was his belief in the resurrection of the dead, which some of them also allowed, or believed,—"that there should be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust."

That the Apostle preached a Gospel in many particulars different from the general belief of our day, is quite evident from this presentation of it—the making prominent of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. True, some might claim that it is unnecessary to make this doctrine prominent, because there are few Sadducees today—few who deny the resurrection of the dead. We answer that there are few who believe that there are any dead. The vast majority of mankind, Christians as well as heathen, have adopted the theory that none are dead—that those who appear to die really become more alive than ever. Not believing in anybody's being dead it would be impossible for them to believe in the resurrection of the dead. Instead, another thought prevails now; viz., a resurrection of the *body*—the person or soul, it is claimed, does not die, but merely sheds the body as an old

garment, and at some future time is to have it back. But it will be conceded that if this were all that the Apostle meant by the resurrection of the dead,—if he really meant a "resurrection of the body," his argument was a weak one. It would be foolish to waste much time or breath or energy in discussing such a proposition as would have no particular advantage or merit, even if it were proven.

The Apostle had a totally different thought: his preaching was to the effect that death is a real penalty for sin, and that there never could be life or consciousness, except by a resurrection of the dead, and that a resurrection of the dead could only come by divine favor in the accomplishment of a redemption of all that had been condemned to death. In preaching the resurrection, therefore, he was declaring not only his faith that Christ Jesus was not dead, but also his faith that God would in due time grant the world a resurrection. Thus Jesus and the resurrection constituted the sum and substance of the gospel hope from the Apostle's standpoint and—because we take his—from our standpoint also.

The question may occur to some—if resurrection (*anastasis*) means a full, complete raising up out of death conditions into perfection of life conditions, how could the Apostle here speak of the resurrection "both of the just and unjust"? How shall we understand this, and harmonize it with other Scriptures which declare that only the justified shall attain full perfection of life?—that he that hath the Son may have life, and he that hath not the Son shall not see life—in its perfection?—that he that will not obey the great Prophet shall be cut off from amongst his people—cut off from life, in the second death?

We answer that the Apostle is not carrying his argument down into the future, declaring that in the future the just ones shall attain to the full perfection of life and the unjust ones also; he is merely referring to those who in the present time are just and unjust. The just of the present time are "justified by faith," and if faithful to the conditions of the call are to have part in the first resurrection. The unjust of the present time are the unjustified, the unbelievers, and the Apostle explains that they believe not because the god of this world hath blinded their minds. (2 Cor. 4:4) However, as the Scriptures distinctly show, it is to be the special work of the next age to open all the blind eyes and to unstop all the deaf ears, and to cause the knowledge of the Lord to fill the whole earth, to the intent that those now unjustified, unjust, may be just before God, and thus share in the resurrection which is provided for all, and which will accomplish the resurrection of all except as its gracious provisions are individually rejected.

Having stated thus his belief in a future life, by a resurrection, the Apostle declares that his present life was being used in accordance with that hope of a future life—with a conscience that controlled his thoughts and words and deeds in relationship to God and men.

Can we wonder that Felix, perverse though he was, himself felt disinclined to yield so noble a prisoner to death, even to accommodate and please the flattering attorney and the influential high priest, whose favor he would undoubtedly prefer to hold? The record leads us additionally to infer that Felix considered that in Paul he had a good opportunity for receiving a bribe for the performance of justice; for in his narrative the Apostle proceeded to show that so far from seeking to do injury to his fellow-creatures, he had brought with him from foreign cities large sums of money. Felix thus perceived that the prisoner, who had liberal education and talent and Roman citizenship, had friends not only in Jerusalem, but abroad. He doubtless concluded that they would be quite willing to make him a handsome present to effect the Apostle's release. This is the suggestion of the 26th verse.

Apparently Felix was considerably interested in his prisoner, and mentioned him to his wife, a Jewess: he was called before them, that they might know further respecting this new teaching. His curiosity was evidently soon more than satisfied, as the Apostle proceeded with his subject, showing the plan of God, the righteousness of the Law, the inability of fallen man to fully meet its requirements, that Jesus became the Redeemer of those condemned by the Law, and that now salvation and life eternal are open to as many as will obey the gospel—forsake sin and lay hold by faith upon the Redeemer. The Apostle proceeded to show that righteousness was the reasonable requirement of the divine law, and that the acceptance of God's favor in Christ led to self-restraint and opposition to natural tendencies, and that there is a judgment day to come, in the which all deflections from righteousness will be rewarded with stripes proportionate to knowledge. The governor trembled; his own wicked life and licentious course stood out before his mental gaze, and he realized that, according to the standards presented, he would have many stripes to bear in the future. His wife, Drusilla, was really the wife of King Azizus; but her conscience, evidently more seared than his, seems not to have been in the least agitated. Felix suggested that at a more convenient season he would hear further of the Gospel; but we doubt if ever he called for any further explanations—he already had enough, more than he was willing to obey. His course is one too frequently imitated since. Many who tremble as they think of their sins, hope that a more convenient time for breaking off may come to them; but a convenient season for abandoning sin—when sin indulged in our members will make no objection to being ousted—will never come. He who would become a follower of the Lord Jesus, must courageously accept of Christ, the power divine for the breaking of the shackles of his slavery to sin—must first love the liberty wherewith Christ alone can make us free. Those who have not this craving will remain slaves of sin until the glorious Millennial morning shall break, until after the completion of the elect church of "overcomers"—until the dawning of the Millennial morning, when the overcomers, with Christ at their head, shall break all the shackles of sin and set all prisoners free, and command all to render obedience to the laws of the kingdom of God, inflicting stripes of punishment proportionate to their present wilfulness in sin, with a view to their recovery, and for restitution to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed with the precious blood.

A good lesson may be learned from the Apostle's method of presenting the truth to Felix. He did not attack the governor's character, nor berate him for his sins. He did better than this. Ignoring the individual entirely, he lifted the mirror of the perfect law of love and liberty and righteousness before the governor, and let him see for himself how far short he came of the perfect standard which alone God can approve. Would that all of God's children could learn thus to reprove sin—by letting the light of truth and the corroboration of the same in their own conduct shine out—their words, and no less their conduct, being epistles of the grace of God and his gracious arrangements, both for rewarding those who seek him and for chastening and correcting those who require it!

The courage of the Apostle in holding up the truth before one who so largely had to do with the decision of his own case is remarkable and commendable. It is in full agreement with the declaration of our Golden Text. Those who are on the Lord's side, and who, therefore, have the Lord on their side, in all of life's affairs, need fear no evil. This absence of fear, however, should not in us, any more than in the Apostle, lead to bravado or discourteous manner or language. The divine rule is, as expressed by the Apostle, that we should speak the truth in love.—Eph. 4:15.

Another lesson taught us by the Apostle's experiences, yea, by all of the Lord's notable children, from the Master down, is that the assaults of calumny, slander, etc., can do them no lasting harm. Look at the Captain of our salvation, against whom all manner of evil was said and done falsely, even to the extent of calling him the prince of devils, and crucifying him as a blasphemer of God. How those assaults of the great adversary, through his deluded children of disobedience, serve now to make the Lord's character and conduct the more transparent and resplendent! So also it is in respect to the Apostle Paul's experiences—they all reflect grandly upon his character today. Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" gives a scene which illustrates this feature of our lesson and encourages all of us to disregard the slanders and evil speakings of the present time, if so be that we can continually realize the divine favor and blessing with us and upon our efforts to serve the Lord. We give an extract from Bunyan's writings as follows:—

"Then the shepherds had the pilgrims to another place, called Mount Innocence, and there they saw a man clothed all in white, and two men, Prejudice and Ill-will, continually casting dirt upon him. Now behold, the dirt, whatsoever they cast at him, would in a little time fall off again, and his garment would look as clean as if no dirt had been cast thereat. Then said the pilgrims, 'What means this?' The shepherds answered, 'This man is named Godly-man, and this garment is to show the innocency of his life. Now, those that throw dirt at him are such as hate his well-doing; but, as you see, the dirt will not stick upon his clothes; so it shall be with him that liveth innocently in the world. Whoever they be that would make such men dirty, they labor all in vain; for God, by that a little time is spent, will cause that their innocence shall break forth as the light, and their righteousness as the noon-day.'"

VOLUNTEER WORK FOR THE SEASON 1903

For several years the dear friends of the cause in all parts of the United States and Canada have industriously circulated on Sundays, at church doors, various of the WATCH TOWER publications. Good results have come—though far less than we hoped for from the vast quantity of printed matter thus circulated. We can only trust that some of the seed has fallen into good ground, and is bringing forth fruitage quietly, which will later be manifest. We believe that on the whole a general modification of the views of Christendom is in progress, and that the tendency is in two directions—the majority toward infidelity, higher criticism, etc., and animosity toward the truth; and a minority toward a proper appreciation of the Word of God and its teachings. We are thus encouraged to go on in the good work while it is called today, realizing that a dark night of unbelief is rapidly settling over our dear brethren and sisters still in Babylon, and that those whom we would rescue must be reached speedily, if at all, before the great time of trouble shall have closed the door to the high calling.

We propose that the volunteer work this year be varied a little from the methods of previous years—to the extent that the tracts we are expecting shortly to furnish be *circulated from house to house*, on Sunday forenoons, instead of being circulated at church-doors. We advise that foreign quarters, and especially Roman Catholic quarters, be avoided, as the circulation of tracts there would mean a loss of time, effort and means. Our thought in making this change for the current season is that there may be people who would thus be reached who have not been reached by the church distributions of the past. We find that there are today quite a number of thinking people who rarely go to church, sometimes for one reason and sometimes for another. Amongst these are some of the most conscientious, God-fearing and well-disposed, who should be amenable to the influences of present truth. We have found it so.

Our arrangement with the printers is that the two tracts which shall constitute the "ammunition" for this year shall be put up, mixed alternately, in bundles. The thought is, not to give two at each house, but one, that neighbors may possibly exchange with each other, and thus a greater variety of reading matter be utilized.

This new method of distribution will render useless the information secured by the various captains during former seasons, but will, nevertheless, give them plenty to do in districting their cities and towns so that every house in proper districts shall be reached and served, and so that the workers shall not lap upon each other's territory. We recommend that the circulation take place on Sunday mornings, at such hour as seems to the friends at each place the most convenient one, least likely to inconvenience those who rejoice to give their time in this service.

It may be possible that some of the friends will find a week-day more convenient than a Sunday, and if this be so we advise that their wishes for territory and tracts be granted. On the whole, however, we rather think that Sunday will be the most advantageous and convenient day. We are not to think of this, nor will other right-minded people think of it, as being "labor," and in violation of Sunday rest. The walking will be no more than would ordinarily be done in going to church, and the labor would be considerably less than in the preaching of a sermon, while the printed sermon thus delivered will, in the judgment of the distributors, be superior, of course, to what would be generally obtained.

FOR THE GERMAN WORK

We are preparing this season to do some volunteer work amongst the German Protestant churches, and will be pleased to fill requisitions for "ammunition" in that language. We advise that this material be served on Sunday in the way the English churches were served in previous years, as it would be difficult to locate the Germans otherwise.

We hope that all orders will be with us promptly, and as soon as possible we will have the tracts shipped. We remember daily in prayer the dear brethren and sisters engaged in this, as well as in every branch of the service of the Lord, that his rich blessing may go with the efforts put forth, to the awakening of the true ones of the flock. May grace, mercy and peace abide with all in your loving efforts to coöperate in the spread of the glad tidings.

"ALMOST THOU PERSUADEST ME"

ACTS 26:19-29.—MAY 24.

"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day."

Paul remained a prisoner at Cæsarea two years—until the recall of Felix to Rome. According to history, the latter had given ground for much complaint by the use of his office, and in order to placate the Jews, and to avoid further animosities, he left Paul a prisoner, instead of doing him the justice of acknowledging that he had committed no crime and, therefore, had full right to his liberty. It is impossible for us at this distance even to surmise with any accuracy what may have been the Lord's object in permitting his faithful representative to be thus isolated, and debarred from the privileges of service. On the one hand, it may have been to give the Apostle rest, quiet, opportunity for further study of the truth. On the other hand, it may have been to teach him a lesson of patience, submission and confidence in God;—that his services were not indispensable; that while the Lord had not let go of him, and would ultimately deliver him, he was not indispensable to the divine plan. These are important lessons for all of God's people to learn, and particularly all who are in any prominent way identified with his service.

On the other hand, it may be that the Lord had a work for the Apostle to do at Cæsarea, where possibly he had contact with the officers of the garrison—and where they would have opportunities for observing the man and appreciating the power of God to uphold him in his adversities. We may be sure that the Apostle let his light shine on every proper occasion, and we may be sure also that his labor was "not in vain in the Lord," whatever it was, and however it was accepted or made useful in the interests of others. If, even, he had no opportunity for serving others, and the work of grace were accomplished in his own heart, it was not in vain, and faith commands us to accept the matter without doubt respecting the wisdom of the arrangement.

Festus, the successor of Felix as Roman governor, was of a totally different character from his predecessor. The Apostle styles him "noble Festus," and history confirms the appellation. The Jewish rulers, taking advantage of the fact that a new governor would naturally desire to make a favorable impression in respect to prompt dealing with prisoners charged with sedition, rioting, disloyalty, etc., quickly brought Paul's case to the attention of Festus. Doubtless their charges were the same as those made before Felix, coupled with suggestions, perhaps, that Felix had been rather lax in his dealings, and that they doubted not that the new governor, appointed by the emperor as a more capable person, would, on the contrary, show his thoroughgoing character by bringing all such offenders to justice. Apparently, however, they realized that it would be useless to attempt to try the case before the governor, since they had no witnesses to any wrong-doing which he could recognize as against Roman law or the privileges of a Roman citizen. Apparently their explanation was that the Apostle's conduct had been an assault upon their religion, along lines which the Roman governor, unacquainted with their religion, would not be prepared to appreciate. They therefore asked that the prisoner be tried before the Sanhedrin. The governor acknowledged his ignorance of the religion of the Jews, and made no objection to the trial of the prisoner by the religious court of his countrymen; but the Apostle was a Roman, and since he claimed Roman citizenship it was not permissible to turn him over to his countrymen for trial unless with his consent. The matter, therefore, was appealed to the Apostle: was he willing to be released as a Roman prisoner, and to be turned over to his countrymen for trial, according to their usages in religious matters? The Apostle promptly replied that he would not consent to this; that as a Roman citizen he had a right to Roman privileges, and therefore appealed his case to Cæsar's court at the capital city. He well knew the animosity of his countrymen, and that those who were ready to assassinate him two years before were probably still unchanged in heart. The Apostle's course furnishes a good example for all of the Lord's people in similar circumstances. It is a mistake, made by some well-meaning members of the Lord's family, to suppose that the Master's teaching of non-resistance means that they should put forth no efforts on their own behalf. It is our privilege to avail ourselves of every right granted to us by the laws of the country in which we live. It is proper for us to appeal to higher or better courts if we can, to obtain that justice which might not be obtainable in lower courts. But having exhausted all such

legal resources and remedies, the Lord's people are to be submissive to the results—not anarchists, not grumblers, not resisters of the decisions of the law. Another matter worthy of notice is that, so far as the records show, the Apostle did not berate or calumniate his people, the Sanhedrin or others associated as his prosecutors and persecutors. The lessons for the Lord's people today is to speak evil of no man; take advantage of every legal right and privilege and opportunity, and accept the final results as the providence of God.

Festus was placed in a peculiar position; in sending the Apostle to Rome, as he was obliged to do in the case of appeal of a Roman citizen, he must of necessity send some charges, and being a just man he desired that the charges should be truthfully stated. Confessing himself to be ignorant of the Jewish religion, he asked King Agrippa and his wife, Bernice, who were nominal Jews (really Edomites), to hear the Apostle's explanation of his case, that he might advise him respecting how serious were the divergencies between Christians and Jews in doctrine.

The invitation was accepted, and the Apostle began his address before the king and queen and the Roman governor, and, doubtless, quite a retinue of officers and soldiers. Here was an opportunity for preaching the Gospel to the people, whom the Apostle could otherwise never have expected to reach. He appears to have appreciated the occasion thoroughly, and made a stirring address, his text being the circumstances of his own conversion—narrated here for the third time. We cannot doubt that he was guided of the Lord in the matter, and it offers the suggestion to all ministers of the truth that nothing is apt to appeal more quickly to others than those things which have appealed to ourselves. Every minister of the truth, to speak heartily and forcefully, should speak from conviction, and the conviction should be backed by reasonable and positive evidences. Nothing could appeal to his hearers more strongly than the fact that he admitted that he had been a persecutor of the Christians himself, before he saw the way of the Lord more perfectly, and that now, seeing the Lord's way, he was sacrificing all that man could hold dear in his service of the truth.

The fact that the Apostle was addressing royalty did not hinder him from bringing out the salient features of the Gospel, and these are, we fear, too frequently forgotten by many. (1) Repentance from sin; (2) turning to God to seek his favor, to know and to do his will; (3) the doing of good works, and thereby showing that repentance was sincere. Because our present work is very largely that of "reaping" rather than "sowing," we have less need to appeal to those who are living in sin and alienation from God, and needing reformation of life; but whenever we have occasion to present the message of the Lord to some or to any whom we have reason to believe are not living in harmony with the requirements of the Gospel along these lines, we should be careful, as the Apostle was, to leave no room for misunderstanding—no room for thinking that the gospel of Christ is sympathy with uncleanness, impurity of heart or life, sin, selfishness or evil deeds.

We are here informed, though not elsewhere, that the Apostle had at some time in his experience preached the Gospel throughout all the country of Judea—evidently before he went to Antioch and engaged in the general work amongst Gentiles—possibly during the two years prior to his first going to Antioch. The Apostles thus showed his auditors that his work had not been exclusively to the Jews nor exclusively to the Gentiles, but to both according to opportunity. It is for this cause, he declares—because realizing the change of dispensation by which God's grace was not confined any longer to the Jews only—that the Jews specially hated him and seized him in the Temple, and attempted to kill him. It was the selfishness on the part of the Jews that made the Apostle specially obnoxious to them. They were opposed to Jesus, but specially opposed to the giving of his gospel to the Gentiles—the teaching that the Gentiles might now, in any sense of the word, enjoy equal privileges with the Jews in respect to God's favor, etc.

In referring to the preservation of his life, the Apostle does not give credit to Lysias, the commander of the garrison at Jerusalem, but declares that he obtained help of God, by whom he had been sustained to the time of his speaking. Doubtless on a proper occasion the Apostle would have been quite willing to have given Lysias full credit for promptness in preserving his life; but speaking from the highest standpoint of his own appreciation and ours, he gave the credit for his deliverance to the Lord. There is a good lesson in this for all of the Lord's people. How apt many are to give credit to "luck" or "chance" or human instrumentality, overlooking the fact that the Lord's saints are the special objects of his care, and that the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them and delivereth them.

The next sentence intimates that during the two years of the Apostle's imprisonment he had been witnessing, preaching the Gospel, both to small and great—such of the soldiers or servants or commanders of the camp as seemed to have a hearing ear undoubtedly were communicated with. We may be sure that the Apostle slackened not at any time his endeavors to serve the great Master, the Captain of our salvation, as a true soldier and faithful servant. So, too, should we continue to serve, even when apparently the most favorable opportunities are withheld from us. "Thou knowest not which shall prosper, either this or that."—Eccl. 11:6.

We should notice what the Apostle specially testified, and consider it a clue to our most favorable testimonies in the interest of the same cause. He doubtless presented the subject from various standpoints at different times; but the essence, the substance, of his message on all occasions was the death and resurrection of Christ, as the one in whom were fulfilled the types of the Jewish law and the declaration of the prophets. He did not stop with declaring the death and resurrection, but pointed to the ultimate legitimate results of these—that they meant that eventually the true light should shine unto all the Jewish people and also to the Gentiles. "This is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." It is in vain that we attempt to preach any other gospel—no other will be considered acceptable by him whom we would serve. We find, on the contrary, some today preaching a coming blessing of a new age and its light and favors to mankind, but denying the Scriptural foundation for such hopes—the death of Christ as our redemption price, and his resurrection, that he might be our helper and deliverer. Others, too, state the matter from a different standpoint, claiming that the favor of God and the blessing of forgiveness through Christ is to extend even to the heathen—but without light; that they will be saved in their darkness and heathenism. Let all who would ultimately hear the Master's words, "Well done, good and faithful servant," be careful to preach the same gospel that the Apostle proclaimed; viz., the one based upon the ransom sacrifice of Christ, attested by his resurrection, on account of which the Lord is yet to be (during the Millennial age) the true light that will lighten every man, every member of our race, and bring to each and to all not only the blessings of opportunity but also tests and proportionate responsibility.

King Agrippa was evidently considerably informed along the lines of the teaching of the law and the prophets, for the Apostle appealed to him as able to corroborate his presentations respecting the law and the prophets; but Festus the Gentile, who had no knowledge of Jewish hopes and promises, was astounded as he heard the Apostle's line of argument—doubtless much more extended than is presented in the record. Interrupting the Apostle by speaking still louder than he, Festus cried, "Paul, thou art beside thyself! Much learning doth make thee mad!"—your head is turned; you are painting fancy pictures when you tell us of a great God, our Creator, and that he cares for us, his creatures, and has provided for our redemption through the sacrifice of his Son, and that he has raised him from the dead, and is ultimately to send a blessing to every member of our race. Surely this is your own imagination! It is a wonderful picture, astounding to me who, as a Gentile, never had so connected a presentation respecting any of the deities of whom I have heard by the thousand.

Truth is stranger than fiction, and it is no wonder that some today, like Festus of old, find it hard to believe in the goodness and wonderful provision that our heavenly Father has made for his creatures. Today, if some of our worldly friends note our enthusiasm for the Lord, his brethren and his truth, it all seems very different from any religious sentiments or feelings, hopes or ambitions they have entertained, and they are inclined to say of us also that our heads are a little turned. They think it not strange if men become enthusiastic about politics or money-making, because such enthusiasm is common to men; everybody is more or less excited and interested in money-getting and in politics. But when it comes to religion, they say to themselves, No one knows anything about this matter; it is all pure speculation, and these people must be crazy when they think of their religion as being tangible, worthy of self-denial and the enduring of persecutions. We admit that no romance of earth ever equaled this one of the divine arrangement for man's salvation:—the fall; the calamity of death and disease, mental, physical and moral; the sending of God's own son; his offering of himself as the sin-offering on our behalf; his resurrection and ascension to glory, honor and power; the gathering of a little flock to be his bride

and joint-heir in the kingdom; and, by and by, the establishment of a kingdom for the blessing and enlightenment of all the families of the earth. No novel, no plot of human concoction, could ever equal this one. It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes. We cannot wonder if those who see from the outside—who do not see the strength and beauty and consistency and harmony from the inside standpoint—consider that we who see matters from the right standpoint are too much enthused. They cannot appreciate the fact that we accept gladly the privilege of self-sacrifice, in order thereby to attest our love and devotion to the Lord and to be accounted worthy a share with him as members of his church, his bride.

The time will come, and it is not far distant now, when many who are now highly esteemed amongst men for their wisdom, will be seen to have been foolish, and many who are now esteemed fools for Christ's sake and for the Gospel's sake, will be seen to have been truly wise in choosing the heavenly things and in being willing to surrender the earthly things for the attainment of the heavenly, because it is impossible to serve God and Mammon.

The Apostle's answer to Festus was not flattery, but Christian courtesy. Festus was a noble man, and it is not improper to speak the truth in reasonable language, and to give a merited compliment. "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth words of truth and soberness." So, when we answer the world, let us remember the difference of standpoint, and that our privilege of seeing the deep things of God is the result of our having been accepted of him through consecration and obedience, receiving the spirit of the Anointed, whereby we can know the things freely given unto us of God.

The Apostle appealed to the king for corroboration of the things he declared, evidently well assured that the declaration of the Gospel had created so much commotion amongst the Jews that the king had heard thereof repeatedly. The thing was not done in a corner; it was a public matter of general knowledge, and had Festus been living in the country he would not question the facts.

The Apostle appealed to Agrippa in a most earnest and dignified tone. "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." The intimation is that the Apostle had in this discourse set forth the fulfilment of the prophecies so fully, so explicitly, that anyone believing them to be inspired could not doubt that Jesus was the Messiah. This led to the notable words of Agrippa, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

The New Testament revisers evidently considered this language ironical, but it does not so seem to us. The Apostle's rejoinder seems to contradict that thought, "I would that thou wert not only almost but altogether such as I am—except these bonds." It is presumed upon reasonable grounds that, although Agrippa did not become a Christian, this knowledge of the principles underlying Christianity remained with him and influenced him during the remainder of his life. History tells us that in the subsequent persecutions that arose in connection with the trouble coming upon the Jewish nation Agrippa received and kindly entreated the Christians who fled to him for protection.

How many there are in Christian lands who have heard the Gospel message more or less distinctly, and have been "almost persuaded" to lay hold of the grace of God, but neglect opportunities of action and have lost the appreciation of the privilege. These, like Agrippa, will have comparatively small conception of the wonderful things they came so near to grasping and yet missed. When they shall come forth from the grave and enjoy the great privileges of the Millennial kingdom it will amaze them to know what great opportunities they had to become members of the little flock, the Lord's associates on the throne.

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THE EDITOR ON HIS EUROPEAN JOURNEY

U. S. M. S. "NEW YORK."

Greetings to "the Children of the Morning"—of the Dawn—of the Light:—

On board the Steamship "New York" I am nearing Great Britain and the dear brethren there whom I know by correspondence and so dearly love, and whom I hope soon to greet personally. Nevertheless, all the dear readers of the WATCH TOWER are before my mental vision, and I take this opportunity for sending you a message of love and fellowship. It is a source of great pleasure and encouragement to me to realize that your love and prayers are with me on my journey; and I well know that every feature of my experiences will be of interest to you.

Just a week ago (on April 14th) I bade farewell to a goodly company of the church at the railway depot in Pittsburgh. On the previous Sunday I said "Goodbye" to the church at Allegheny as a whole, shaking hands with about 300 personally; but I was cheered, nevertheless, by the final parting at the train. Next morning I was met at New York depot by representatives of the churches of New York, Brooklyn, Yonkers, Jersey City, Perth Amboy and Philadelphia, who saw me on board my steamer and tarried until the starting of the vessel,—then from the pier waved me their love and good wishes as they assured me previously that I had their prayers.

I was not so vain as to accept these love-tokens as personal tributes; but received them, on the contrary, as expressions of devotion to the Lord and appreciation of his truth, with which in his providence I had become associated as a servant;—a minister of the Lord, a minister of his Word, a minister of his people. All may be sure that my heart fully reciprocated the kind wishes and blessing accepted from these dear friends, who in a still larger sense represented to me all of the dear WATCH TOWER readers of America who rejoice to send me, with their prayers and love, as their representatives for a few weeks to those of like precious faith in Europe.

Our steamer has had a quiet voyage, and in many ways I have been "kept" by divine providence—so that I have had no seasickness since the first two days out, and was able to respond to the invitation of our captain to assist in conducting the usual Sunday morning services of the vessel—including an address of about thirty minutes on the hope that is the anchor to our souls, both sure and steadfast.—Heb. 6:19.

I had no reason to hope that among the passengers would be *many* with "an ear to hear;" nor could I expect, in so brief a space, to do more than sound one chord on our precious Harp (the Bible). Committing results to the Lord, I pointed out the great Covenant promise which our heavenly Father gave to Abraham and his seed: that it was, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed;" that the natural seed, Isaac and Jacob and the nation of Israel, held fast the promise but never inherited it; that the true seed only began to come in the person of the Lord Jesus; that the true church, the true members of the body of Christ, are members of this "seed" and heirs according to that original promise which has not yet had its fulfilment, but awaits the completion of the seed—the completion of "the church which is his body." "If ye be Christ's *then are ye* Abraham's seed, and *heirs* according to the promise."—Gal. 3:29.

Briefly noting that this is the Christian's *hope* of our text, and that it is still *unfulfilled*, we saw that it is still to be striven for by all who would make their calling and election sure; and that in the light of this promise and hope all true Christians should recognize present experiences, trials, etc., as so much of their education in the school of Christ,—in preparation for their work in the coming age—the work of blessing the families of earth during the promised Millennial Kingdom.

Only five of the passengers have had either interest or curiosity sufficient to lead them to converse with me on the subject,—and only two of these with earnestness; but if two or even one should ultimately develop as a ripe grain of "wheat" how glad and thankful we would be. So far as I can ascertain, about one-half of the passengers are professing Christians, and about two-thirds of these Episcopalians—of whom not one has seemed interested. Of the two manifesting interest one is a Baptist, the other a Methodist. A Baptist minister aboard declared himself an evolutionist and in full sympathy with "higher criticism"—denying that the Lord *bought* us. When pressed with Scripture he denied the authority of Paul and the other apostles, and claimed to hold to the life and words of Jesus *only*. When confronted with our Lord's own words to the effect that he came to "give his life a *ransom* for many" he avoided further discussion.

More and more it becomes evident that we are in the great trial-day of the Christian faith, and that it is not so much a question of Who will fall? as of "Who shall be *able to stand?*" (Rev. 6:17) The prophet declared, "A thousand shall fall at thy side" (Psa. 91:7), and so we find it. So far from glorying in the evidences that many are falling from the *fundamental*

faith, and that many have already fallen, we are pained. Nevertheless, recognizing this as one of the signs of the close of the present dispensation, we can rejoice that the Millennium of blessing will ere long be ushered in;—when dim faith will be swallowed up in the sunlight of truth;—when "the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep;" when "the wayfaring man though a fool need not err."—Isa. 9:11; 35:8.

I seal and mail this when near the British shore, where (Southampton) Brother Henninges is expected to meet me and accompany me to London. Continue to remember me in your prayers, that our Father and Elder Brother may direct our every word and act to his glory and to the profit of our dear brethren on this side of the world of various tongues but of one spirit—in as well as outside of Babylon.

Faithfully, your brother and servant in the Lord,

CHARLES T. RUSSELL.

THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. . . . Ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious, to whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."*—1 Pet. 2:9, 3-5.

At no time in the church's history has our great adversary been so active in multiplying false doctrines and in diverting attention from the truth by introducing unprofitable and irrelevant questions as at present. Just when the exaltation and glory of the church are soon to be accomplished, and when the faithful are about to be received into the joy of their Lord, every device is resorted to, to beguile them of their reward and to frustrate this feature of the divine plan. To really frustrate any part of the divine plan is impossible: God has purposed to take out from among men a "little flock," "a people for his name," a royal priesthood; and such a company is assuredly being gathered; but whether all those now in the race for the prize will surely be of that company, is still an open question. Take heed, beloved, that no man take thy crown. (Rev. 3:11) If any come short of their privileges and prove unworthy of the rich inheritance, there are others who will quickly fill their places.

We beseech you, brethren, as you value the glorious hope set before you in the Gospel, that you give no heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, as the Apostle terms them (1 Tim. 4:1); but that, with fixedness of purpose, you apply yourselves to the one thing you are called and are privileged to do as prospective members of that royal priesthood. Let us never forget that we are a "peculiar people," separate from the great body of nominal Christians, as well as from the world, having higher hopes, aims and ambitions and favored with a clearer insight into the deep things of God, having been called out of our former darkness into his marvelous light. And if thus separate from the world and from Christians who partake largely of the worldly spirit, what wonder if we find them all out of harmony with us, and either ignoring or opposing us.

Such opposition is to be expected and will, doubtless, continue until we finish our course in death. To submit patiently to this opposition is to sacrifice our own *natural* preferences for the friendship and the pleasures of the present life, and to endure hardness as good soldiers for the truth's sake, in whatever shape that hardness may come, in our effort to do the Lord's will and work of advancing the interests of his kingdom. This is what is meant by the presenting of our bodies living sacrifices in the divine service. To be really in this service involves: first, the careful and continual study of God's plan; second, the imbibing of its spirit; leading, thirdly, to an enthusiastic zeal for its accomplishment, and to activity to the extent of ability in its service, at whatever cost or sacrifice it may require.

If we are faithful in this service we have no time, nor have we the disposition, to give heed either to false doctrines or to other themes which have no bearing on the *one thing* to which we have solemnly dedicated our lives. Our time is not our own if we have consecrated all to God; and consequently, we have none to spare for the investigation of fanciful false theories, built upon other foundations than that laid down in the Scriptures; nor have we time to devote to the ideas and pursuits which engross the world's attention, many of which are harmless in themselves, but would be harmful to us if we were to allow them to occupy consecrated time and to divert our attention from the *one thing* we ought to be doing. The Apostle warns us "to shun profane babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness;" but adds, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." "Teach no other doctrine: neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying which is in faith."—2 Tim. 2:15, 16; 1 Tim. 1:3, 4.

Each consecrated believer should ask himself, How carefully have I studied that which I have clearly recognized as divine truth? and how fully capable am I, therefore, of handling the sword of the spirit? Few indeed are those who can say they have fully digested and assimilated all they have received; that they have let none of these things slip from memory; that they have so treasured it up in their hearts that it is their meditation by day and by night; that they have a ready answer—a "Thus saith the Lord"—for every man that asks them a reason for the hope that is in them, concerning any point of doctrine; that they can clearly and intelligently portray the divine plan, quote the divine authority for each successive step of it, and, if need be, point out its place in the divine system of types. To gain such proficiency in the Word is indeed the work of a lifetime; but every day should see a closer approximation to that proficiency, and will, indeed, if we are faithful students and faithful servants of the truth.

If all the consecrated were thus busily engaged putting on the armor of God, and in proving it by actual use in zealous endeavors to herald the truth and to help others to stand, there would indeed be no time left for disputings on the Anglo-Israel question, or whether the earth is a plane instead of a globe, or whether the principles of socialism would be advisable among Christians in the management of their temporal affairs. Nor would there be time for politics, nor even for the good temperance-reform work, nor the work among fallen women, nor among the slums of the great cities, nor even for preaching the doctrine of divine healing. All this is work which can and will be effectually accomplished in "the times of restitution," now in the near future: and, besides, there are others interested in these works (and we are glad of it and bid them God-speed), while we recognize and seek to accomplish the work set before us in the divine plan. And if, indeed, we have no consecrated time for these things which are only side issues and not harmful in themselves, except as they divert attention and consume valuable time which has been consecrated to another and higher use, surely there is none whatever for giving heed to false doctrines such as so-called Christian Science and the various no-ransom or Evolution theories, all of which are attempts to show men how to climb up to everlasting life by some other way than that which the Scriptures point out; viz., by faith in the precious blood of Christ shed on Calvary for our redemption. He that climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber (John 10:1); and we are commanded to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them.—Eph. 5:11.

How narrow this way! say some, contemptuously, of those who, like Paul, devote their energies to the *one thing*—the service of the truth. Yes, that will be the verdict against you, of all except the few who, like yourself, have carefully sought out this "narrow way," and who are determined to walk in it, regardless of the reproach it brings. The way to the mark for the prize of our high calling is not wide enough to admit all the vain philosophies and foolish questions and babblings and speculations of science, falsely so called. It is only wide enough to admit the Lord's plan and those who are willing to discard all other plans and projects and questionings and to devote themselves fully and entirely to its service, and who are quite willing to bear any reproach it may bring.

Consider your calling, brethren, for ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood to offer sacrifices acceptable to God; a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. The very object of our being called into this light is that we may let it shine. If we do not let it shine we are unworthy of it, and the treasure will be taken away and we will be left in darkness. If indeed we have received the light and have consecrated ourselves fully to God, let us ask ourselves, What am I doing to show forth the praises of him who hath called me out of darkness? Am I going forth with

* Sinaitic MS. omits *spiritual* before sacrifices.

these tidings to my neighbors near and far? Am I busy from day to day in seeking to vindicate the divine character, and to make known God's righteous ways? Am I economizing time and means, and so arranging my temporal affairs as to give as much time as possible to the work? And, then, am I diligently studying to make myself thoroughly familiar with the truth, so that I may indeed be a living epistle known and read of all men within the circle of my influence?—a workman indeed that need not be ashamed? Can I truly affirm that I am

"All for Jesus, all for Jesus—
All my being's ransomed powers;
All my thoughts, and words, and doings,
All my days and all my hours"?

If so, then we are just narrow-minded enough to say, This one thing I do; and I make everything else bend to this one thing of showing forth God's praises and helping others into his marvelous light. And to this end I cultivate and use what talents I possess as a wise steward of my heavenly Master.

Dearly beloved, we impose no vows or bondage upon each other, but the call has its own limitations: the Master has directed us, saying, "Go ye and teach all nations [for the gospel is no longer confined to the Jewish nation], baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all things"—concerning our (questionable) Anglo-Israelitish origin? No.—All things concerning the shape of the earth? No.—All the vain philosophies of men who have erred from the truth, and all the subtle sophistries by which they make void the word of God? No. —"*Observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*"—Matt. 28:19, 20.

This is just what the apostles did. There were plenty of errors and side issues in their day; but, ignoring them, they resolutely devoted themselves to the promulgation of the truth. Paul paid no attention to his fleshly genealogy, because he recognized himself as a new creature in Christ Jesus. It was easier for him to prove his fleshly origin as an Israelite than for any of us to do it; but he cared nothing for that. He did not care whether he was of the ten tribes or of the two tribes; for he had on none of the tribal righteousness of the Law. His only ambition was to be found "in Christ, not having on his own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ—the righteousness which is of God by faith." (Phil. 3:9) He says (verses 3-7), "We [new creatures in Christ] are the [real] circumcision, which worship God in spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh [or the fleshly relationships], though indeed I have had confidence also in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I had more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is of the law, *blameless*. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ."

Hear him again in his zeal for this *one thing* to which he had devoted his life: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellence of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the mystery of God; for I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. [I *riveted* your attention on this *one thing!* I kept this *one thing* continually before you.] And my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and power [of the truth], that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God".—1 Cor. 2:1-5.

Paul was a plain, uncompromising teacher. When he knew he had the truth, he spoke it with confidence, and boldly declared that everything contrary to it was false doctrine; and he taught his disciples that it was not only their privilege, but their duty also, to be *established* in the faith and to know, on the evidence of God's Word, why they believed, and to be able to give to every man that inquired for it a reason for the hope that was in them.

There is among Christians today a great lack of established faith on any point of doctrine. They say, "I think," "I hope," or "Perhaps it may be so, but this is only my opinion, and it may be right or it may be wrong. I have charity, however, for your opposing opinion, and for every man's opinion; for who knows which is right? I'm sure I cannot say; but, nevertheless, I have *great faith* and charity (?). I shake hands with every body and call him brother if he claims to be a Christian, no matter what he believes and teaches, whether he is pointing to Christ as the door to the sheepfold, or whether he is trying to teach men how to climb up some other way. In Christian love I bid them all Godspeed and pray for the success of all their teachings, no matter how antagonistic they may be to each other or to the Scriptures as I read them."

All this passes among Christians generally for large-hearted benevolence and personal humility, while in fact it is an ignoble, compromising spirit that is unwilling to forego the friendship of those who oppose the Lord by opposing the truth; and which would rather see the truth suffer, and those weak in the faith stumbled, than that they should bear the reproach of Christ. Those who have real and sincere faith in God are willing to take him at his word; and with these the first principles of the doctrine should long ago have been established; much of the superstructure of gold and silver and precious stones should already be erected, and the work be steadily progressing. Such are able, if they are loyal and true to God, to discern between truth and error. The Apostle John, recognizing this ability, says, "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed; for he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds." (2 John 10) We ought to *know* what we believe and why we believe it, and then should be bold and uncompromising in declaring it; for "if the trumpet give an uncertain sound who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

Again says the Apostle (1 Cor. 2:6-10), "However, we speak wisdom among them that are perfect [developed; we are not to cast our pearls before swine]; yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes [the popular leaders and teachers] of this world, that come to naught. But we speak the wisdom of God, which was hidden in a mystery, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew. . . . Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit; for the spirit [or mind of God in us, is so anxious to know his truth, that it] searcheth all things; yea, the deep things of God."

The princes of this world do know something of astronomy and geology, and have their ideas of the shape of the earth, etc., but they have not known this hidden wisdom of the divine plan, which maps out a destiny so glorious to the faithful saints who will constitute the royalty of the age to come. Let the world speculate as it may about its own themes of interest, but let us devote ourselves to the one thing in hand, avoiding foolish questions and genealogies and contentions, ... for they are unprofitable and vain. (Titus 3:9) Let us be faithful to our commission to preach this gospel to the meek who are ready to hear it. (Isa. 61:1) Let the bride of Christ be diligent in making herself ready (Rev. 19:7), for the marriage of the Lamb is the event of the very near future.

NO CONDEMNATION AND NO SEPARATION

ROM. 8:1-14.—MAY 31.

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

The chapter of which this lesson forms a part is unquestionably one of the most precious in the entire Bible. It begins with the assurance that condemnation has passed, and concludes with logical proofs of everlasting divine favor toward those who become "New Creatures" in Christ Jesus. In the preceding chapter the Apostle specially points out condemnation and imprisonment upon the whole race of Adam as sinners under the divine law—and especially upon the Jew, additionally under the Mosaic Law. He points out the utter hopelessness of those who attempt to escape the penalty of death by self-justification through "works of the law." After thus showing the bondage of all, he points to the door of salvation—the redemption in our Lord Jesus: saying, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." It is to this class, which gets the victory through Christ, that there is no condemnation, and can be no separation from the divine love and favor, so long as they abide in him as the branch in the vine.

This lesson is well fitted in, as giving us a glimpse of the Apostle's spiritual liberty and relationship to God at the time of his imprisonment at Cæsarea. Once he had had his liberty according to the flesh, and in his ignorance and blindness had done many things contrary to the Lord, not properly appreciat-

ing his liberty nor knowing how to use it aright. Now, although a prisoner and outwardly restrained, he had gained great liberty and blessing, and also freedom from divine condemnation, with assurance of hope toward God, not only respecting the present life, but also the one to come.

In the first verse the word "therefore" carries us back to the preceding argument, and shows us that our freedom from present condemnation is the result of our Lord's sacrifice on our behalf. (Rom. 7:25) It is because we appreciate the fact that justice provided a redemption price for our sins, and because we have availed ourselves of the terms offered its beneficiaries, that we realize that the condemnation of the divine Law no longer holds as against us. In his preceding argument the Apostle had clearly shown that the difficulty did not lie in the law itself; that God could not give an imperfect or, in any sense, an evil law. The law was just, perfect and good; the difficulty was in us, that through the inheritance of sin and its weaknesses we were unable fully to comply with the requirements of the divine law. How, then, do we escape its condemnation? The Apostle answers that we reached the present standpoint of release—freedom from condemnation—when we came into Christ. Others, out of Christ, are still under the condemnation. It is an important question, therefore, for each to decide for himself, whether or not he has taken the step which alone can bring him into this happy condition. The Apostle, in a previous chapter (5:1), marks the first step out of condemnation and into Christ as being justification, which brought peace with God, the covering of the sins that were past; but this was not enough, for if all the sins that were past were cancelled, and no arrangement was made for our daily imperfections of word and deed, we would quickly be again condemned. Hence, to those who would be entirely freed from condemnation, another step was necessary—a step into Christ. These two steps should not be confounded; it is one thing to get out of responsibility for past sins, and quite another step to get into Christ, and under the full covering of his merits as respects all the remainder of life. The two steps are mentioned in Rom. 5:1, 2: faith in the redemption brings justification from past sins and peace with God; but by it *also*, as the Apostle explains, we have *access into this grace* (the favor of sonship, membership in the body of Christ) wherein we stand, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God (because glory and honor and immortality are promised to every member of the New Creation—every member of the body of Christ).

The last clause of this verse, "who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit," is properly omitted by the Revised Version, because not found in ancient MSS. The thought, however, is correct enough, and these very words are found in the conclusion of verse 4. The words do not properly apply in verse 1, for that describes those who are in Christ, as members of his body, and none are counted as in him except those who are walking after the spirit—not after the flesh.

The Apostle calls our attention (vs. 2) to two laws in operation. We were under one of these, which sentenced us, as sinners, to death. We got out from under that law entirely when we got into Christ Jesus, as members of his body. Our Redeemer kept the Law, was blameless; then gave his blameless life as a redemption price to purchase us who had been the slaves of sin and death from that slavery. We were redeemed by his precious blood. As he was raised to a new nature by the Father's power, we now are invited to become associates with him in that new nature—to be counted in as members of his body, under him as the head. The whole transaction is one of faith: faith first in his sacrifice, and God's acceptance of it, and our justification thereby. Secondly, faith in our call to membership in his body; faith that our consecration in response to that call made us acceptable with the Father and recorded our names in the Lamb's book of life as children of God upon this new plane. All who can realize that they have taken these two steps may, therefore, realize that from God's standpoint they are no longer thought of nor treated as members of the human family, but as members of the new order—members of the body of Christ.

Hence, they may realize themselves as entirely freed from the condemnation that was against them as human beings, and as having come under a new law, a new arrangement, which in Christ guarantees them life everlasting. The new law judges us as new creatures in Christ, according to the spirit, the mind, the intention, in righteousness, and not as human beings, according to the flesh and its weaknesses and imperfections.

The Law of God,—strict justice without mercy,—represented in the Mosaic Law and its covenant, could not help the weak, fallen race, because the easiest requirement it could make would be perfection toward God and toward men, and our race being fallen was unable to comply with its demands. It was, therefore, "weak" (powerless) for our deliverance, because we were weak on account of the imperfect, fallen flesh. But God, through Christ, made an arrangement for us which does not violate his own law—sending his Son to accomplish our redemption—the payment of our penalty. God's Son was not sent in sinful flesh, but "in the likeness," or nature of our flesh, which had become sinful,—he, the while, being holy, harmless, separate from sinners. The object of his coming in our likeness is set forth; viz., as an offering for sin—a sin-offering and atonement-sacrifice on our behalf.

This course in no sense of the word justified sin—in no degree made sin right, or declared it proper. On the contrary, the very means which God adopted for our relief, at the same time "condemned sin in the flesh." Thus at the same time that the door of salvation was opened to us we were most emphatically assured that there was no hope in any other direction.

Notwithstanding the great clearness and explicitness with which this doctrine of the necessity for a sacrifice for sins is set forth in the Scriptures,—in the Old Testament as well as in the New—it seems remarkable that some still stumble over it. There is no avoiding the conviction that there is something wrong with their hearts, else their heads would not thus become confused respecting a matter which is so explicitly set forth in the Word. The Apostle points out that it was so with the Jews as a nation. They stumbled over the cross of Christ;—they then admitted and still acknowledge that Jesus was a great Teacher. Rabbis all over the world today are claiming Jesus as a great Jew, whose teachings have blessed the world in great measure. Their dispute is with the cross of Christ,—that they were sinners who have no way of escape except through an atonement on their behalf, and that Christ's death constituted the sin-offering, through faith in which alone any may become acceptable to God—justified. The same objection exists in the heart of the natural man who is not a Jew. He prefers to climb up some other way, rather than to go through the door; he would use the teachings of Jesus as a ladder to get into the sheepfold; but declines to enter through him as a door, and to acknowledge himself condemned of God and irretrievably lost, except as the great sacrifice for sins and the merit of the Redeemer are applied on his behalf. Nevertheless, those who refuse God's way will find that it is unalterable, and that "there is none other name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved." Those who will not enter by this door, those who will not accept the forgiveness of their sins through the merit of Christ's sacrifice, cannot have the divine favor, cannot be considered members of the body of Christ, nor heirs with him—they are not *in* Christ Jesus—they are yet in their sins, because they believe not God's testimony. Some are now in this attitude who were once in the light of truth on this subject; who once had on the wedding garment, but took it off—rejected the robe of Christ's righteousness, and are attempting to stand before God in their own righteousness, merely accepting Jesus as a Teacher and not as a Redeemer. We consider the condition of such to be most dangerous. We cannot feel sure that they will ever have an opportunity to accept again the merit of the precious blood which they once enjoyed and spurned, "counting the blood of the covenant [the death of Jesus] wherewith they were [once] sanctified an unholy [common] thing," thus doing despite unto the spirit of grace—despising, disdaining, repudiating the favor of divine forgiveness through the blood. So rejecting the Redeemer, they take their cases out of the hands of the Mediator of the New Covenant. Thus they fall at once into the hands of the living God, and are subject to the full requirements of the absolute Law without mercy—because all of God's mercy extended to sinners is in and through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood. We do not say that all who reject the blood of the covenant do so thus to their everlasting loss, but are glad to believe, on the contrary, that many of them have been so blinded by the god of this world that they have never seen clearly and, hence, never rejected entirely the blood-bought robe of righteousness. For all such we shall expect that the light of the new dispensation will show them the divine plan clearly, and we shall trust that many of them will be ready humbly to accept God's grace upon his own terms.

The Apostle points out (vs. 4) that this Law of the spirit of life in which we as new creatures in Christ rejoice is really the same Law that once condemned us—that the change from condemnation to death to justification to life signifies no change in the Law, but a change in our position. It is a law of life to us, because, by God's grace through Christ, we have come into a place where we are able to comply with the requirements of the law and to *fulfill* them. It is not our flesh that has been changed, so that it is perfect and able to obey the law, but that as new creatures the flesh is *reckoned* dead, and we are reckoned according to the spirit or mind; and with our minds, or spirits, or wills, we are able to keep God's law perfectly—that is to say, we can will to do right, we can endeavor to do right, we

can strive to please God, and so long as God accepts the will, the intention, the endeavor, and ignores our flesh and its uncontrollable weaknesses, that long we can realize that the divine law approves us; and that will be just so long as we abide in our present position as members of the body of Christ, and we are privileged to remain members of the body of Christ just so long as our desires are for righteousness and in opposition to sin. The new creature does not love sin, but, instead, loves righteousness, the very reverse. If the will, the heart, should turn again, so as to love unrighteousness, so as to desire to do the things that are contrary to the Lord's will, it would mean that we had died as new creatures, and become alive again as fleshly creatures, to mind the things of the flesh, to have its hopes, its aims and its objects. In that case we should come again under the law of sin and death, and be judged again according to the flesh, the sentence, as before, being, "The wages of sin is death." Moreover, such a turning, as a sow to wallowing in the mire, and as a dog to his vomit would, in the case of those who have become new creatures in Christ and so passed out of Adamic death, mean the second death—the result of their own wilful rejection of God's favor through Christ, which they spurn after having once enjoyed. It will be seen, then, that there are two ways of rejecting God's grace; one by turning to sin (not merely by being overcome of the weaknesses of the flesh temporarily, but by a deliberate choosing of sin, and intentional abandonment of righteousness); the other by a mental rejection of the conditions of favor—a mental repudiation of the blood of the New Covenant. These two forms of committing the sin unto death—unto second death—are clearly set before us by the Apostle in Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-31.

There is force, then, in the Apostle's explicit definition of the class justified under the law of the spirit of life—that it is those who are in Christ, and who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit—who are not seeking to satisfy the cravings, appetites and desires of the flesh, but are seeking to control these, and to keep them in subjection to the new mind, to their utmost ability. Walking after the spirit does not necessarily mean walking *up to* the spirit. Only the Lord Jesus could walk *up to* the spirit of the perfect law of God; but all the members of his body, all who are in Christ Jesus, may walk *after* the spirit—as nearly up to it as may be possible for them to do. Such a walk is acceptable to God, in the case of all those who are abiding in Christ, through faith in his blood. If, by reason of weaknesses of the flesh, through an unfavorable heredity, they be very degraded and weak, and able merely to hobble along with difficulty and slowness after the spirit, they are nevertheless counted as though they walked up to the spirit perfectly. In other words, God's arrangement for accepting the will, the intention, of the members of the body of Christ, instead of their actual performances, meets every requirement, and justifies freely, fully, completely, all who are in Christ—not one of whom could have been justified by the Law under the Jewish covenant or otherwise.

The Apostle answers a supposed question as to how we may know those who are new creatures in Christ and walking after the spirit, from others. This is a difficult question. There are some not in Christ whose flesh is much less depraved than that of some who are in Christ; hence, if they were measured by the deeds of the flesh, the one in Christ might appear to less advantage than the one out of Christ. The Lord, therefore, exhorts his people to judge not by outward appearance merely, assuring them that some are hypocritical, and that God looketh on the heart, the intention. So again the Apostle enjoins us, saying, "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh." He did not mean that we should pay no attention to the shortcomings of the flesh, either in ourselves or in other members of the body. All fleshly weaknesses should be striven against, and they may frequently demand rigorous treatment in the interest of the new creature; but, nevertheless, we are to distinctly differentiate between the new creature and his weak, mortal body, and are to love and sympathize with the brother, while it may be necessary for us, in his interest, and also in the interest of the church, to reprove or rebuke or otherwise correct his wrong course. The Apostle's definition of how we are to know the two classes apart is (vs. 5) that the unregenerate will mind the things of the flesh, while the regenerate will mind the things of the spirit. There is a great gulf fixed between these two classes, and there should be no need that any one should long be in doubt on the subject of whether he is or is not a member of the church, the body of Christ. If he is in Christ he has the new ambitions, the new hopes, the new aims, and however short he may at times come of realizing these aims and ambitions, his heart being right it will always revert to the divine standard. His affections are for the things that are just and pure and good, however he may find the law of sin and death assailing him, through the weaknesses of his mortal body. He is not to be content with merely this condition of mental preference for the right and having his heart solicitous for righteousness experiencing grief if he finds himself overcome by temptation; but, as the Apostle elsewhere enjoins, he is to be so deeply in earnest about the matter that he will not only do his best to right every wrong, but will continue seeking for grace at the heavenly throne, that he may be more and more able to overcome, that he may grow stronger and stronger in spirit, and that the power of his flesh may be correspondingly weakened. The Apostle exhorts such to make straight paths for their feet, for their weaknesses, for their lameness, according to the flesh—to avoid the ways of temptation and weakness as they discover them, and thus show their hearts' desires for righteousness. He urges again that all keep continually setting their affections on things above, so that the things of the earth may have less and less influence and control over them to hinder them in their course. He urges that the heart, the mind, the lips, the conduct, that are filled with the Lord's truth and service, will be thus sanctified and separated so that the wicked one will find less and less opportunity to take the advantage.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE THE FLESHLY MIND

The matter is set forth in still different terms in vss. 6, 7. We are to distinguish the mind of the flesh from the mind that is in accord with God, for the one is at enmity with God and the other in harmony with him. The mind that is in harmony with God finds delight in his Law, in righteousness, purity, goodness, peace, faith through the promises of God, and looks forward with joy to the glorious realization of all the wonderful hopes inspired through those promises. The fleshly mind (however polite or polished or well educated and decorous and under control of the mortal body) is not in accord with God; it has its own ambitions, its own plans, and takes pleasure in these, and is grieved if they are thwarted; builds its hopes and aims chiefly upon what can be attained in this present life; is not in accord with God, nor disposed to accept with gratitude whatever he may be pleased to send; but rather is full of choice and self-will—not subject to divine control, nor can it be, because it is fleshly, and because, at the present time, all mankind is in a state of sin, alienation from God, etc. These two conditions of mind are contrasted, and the Apostle assures us that the one is death; that it means death; means that the person who has that mind is still in the death condition, has not received Christ as the Life-giver. "He that hath the Son hath life," and may have, too, a joy and peace of the new mind in Christ; but he who has not the Son, he who has not surrendered his will, is still in death, still under condemnation, still an alien from God.

This does not mean that those whom we are unable to bring now under the scope of the Gospel of Christ may never become amenable to it. It does not mean, either, that the flesh itself is opposed to God, and God opposed to the flesh. The word "flesh" here is used in the sense of sinful flesh, because all mankind, through the fall, has become sinful. Originally, however, as represented in Father Adam before the fall, the flesh was pronounced very good, and God's own workmanship, in his own image, was not opposed to the law of God, but in full accord with it. The divine law was written in the very organism of our first parents; the difficulty is that through the fall this divine law has been very considerably obliterated, and instead the law of selfishness—which includes all evil—has been engraven upon the hearts of their posterity. Hence the proposition of the Lord for the world is that he will restore all mankind to that primeval condition, for which times of restitution have been provided and promised by the mouth of all the holy prophets. (Acts 3:19-21) It is in full accord with this that the Lord, speaking of the operation of the New Covenant, declares that under it (Christ being the minister of that New Covenant and its administrator during the time of its operation) he will take away the stony heart of selfishness, and will make a new heart of flesh, tender, sympathetic, generous, God-like. In other words, he will re-write in the organism of mankind, by the processes of the Millennial age,—the times of restitution,—all the original character and God-likeness and law which he possessed as originally created. When perfection shall have thus been accomplished for so many as will receive the Lord's favor on his terms of love and hearty obedience, it will no longer be true that the mind of the flesh will be at enmity with God, as it was not true originally, when Adam was in accord with God.

To understand the Apostle it must be kept clearly in mind that he is writing these words, not to the world nor about the world, but to the saints and about the saints. He is describing the condition of those who have passed from death unto life, who have become new creatures, contrasting them with the

world, still in sin and divine disfavor. They that are in the flesh, living according to their own wills, who have not heard, or, hearing, have not accepted God's grace in Christ, cannot please God, cannot be said to be acquitted, cannot be considered as under divine favor.

Turning to the church, the Apostle points out, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwelleth in you." The Apostle here indicates what it is that constitutes us new creatures. We are new creatures because begotten again; because begotten of the spirit of God. We were not thus begotten until first we had been justified by faith in the blood of Christ, and then had heard the invitation to present our bodies living sacrifices, and then had complied with that invitation and consecrated our all upon the Lord's altar. *Then* we received the spirit of God; *then* we were recognized as new creatures in Christ—as no longer flesh beings, but as spirit beings.

Here, then, is the test. Those who have the spirit of Christ must have been begotten to it; those who have not the spirit of Christ are not his. Thus we are to judge ourselves, and thus we are to judge of the brethren—by the spirit, the intention, the will, and not by the success, not by the flesh. Oh, how generous this would make us in our judging of the brethren! If they profess and give any evidence of loving the Lord, trusting in the precious blood, loving holy things, loving the brethren, loving the word of grace and truth, and of seeking to develop the fruits of the spirit, they are surely brethren, surely "in Christ." If they have not this spirit, love the world, prefer worldly company, give themselves wholly to worldly ambitions, pride of life and self-gratification, we have strong reason to doubt their relationship to the Lord, no matter what they may profess. And this feature of the matter should be especially applied by each one of us to himself, as an individual test of his relationship to the Lord, and each one who finds the spirit of worldliness growing upon him should feel that he is losing ground, should seek afresh to set his affection on things above and to grow in grace.

"THE BODY IS DEAD"

The Apostle explains that in the case of these new creatures in Christ, from the divine standpoint the body is treated as dead, but the spirit, or mind, is treated as alive. It is the new creature which God recognizes, to which he purposes to give a new spirit-body in due time—in the first resurrection. It is necessary that this thought be clearly fixed in our minds, in order that we may continually realize our peace toward God and his favor and sympathy toward us in Christ. If we lose sight of the fact that God regards us from the standpoint of the will, if we get to thinking of ourselves and God's estimate of us as according to the flesh, we are sure to get proportionately into darkness and confusion and discouragement. But let us not forget, on the other hand, that the spirit, or will, is counted alive because of its righteousness, because it is in harmony with God. Let us, therefore, never be slack in respect to the will, or intention, governing the conduct of our lives, but remember that any laxity will mean the proportionate loss of spiritual life. To will right is always possible to us, and nothing less than an absolutely loyal will could be acceptable to God in Christ.

However, as the Apostle explains in vs. 11, if God's spirit animates us, the result will surely be that these bodies which we reckon dead, and which God graciously reckons dead, will be so quickened, so energized, so controlled by the new mind, the holy mind, the spirit of our new nature, that they will become actively "quickened"—toward righteousness, toward the service of the Lord, the service of the truth—in doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith. This is only what we should expect, too, for the spirit of God is powerful in whatever way it be applied. As an illustration of its power, the Apostle points us to our Lord Jesus and his literal death, and how God's holy spirit raised Jesus from the dead in his resurrection. The thought is that this power of God thus exercised on behalf of the Lord Jesus, and which he promises so to exercise in the close of this age on behalf of all the faithful members of the body of Christ, indicates a power of God by which, if we avail ourselves of it, the new nature will find strength to conquer to keep the flesh under, and, more than this, to make it active, energetic in the service of righteousness. The Apostle is not here speaking of the future resurrection of the just—the completion of the first resurrection as spirit beings. He is speaking of the figurative resurrection, which the Lord's consecrated people experience in this present time. As he elsewhere expresses it, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above;" and again, "You hath he quickened [made alive, resurrected figuratively] who were dead in trespasses and sins, ... and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."—Col. 3:1; Eph. 2:1, 6.

The sum of the matter, then, is that we who are new creatures find that we do not owe anything as new creatures to the flesh; that all of our advantages and blessings have come to us along other lines. We ought, therefore, to ignore the flesh and its desires and appetites, and ought to walk as strictly after the spirit as possible in all of our affairs. Do we ask why? One answer is here given (vs. 13), "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die." We who have received the grace of God, who have heard of his mercy and love, and have been accepted in the Beloved, have counted all our earthly interests as sacrifices, that we might have share with Christ in the sufferings of this present time and in the glory that shall follow. For us to live after the flesh would mean to die in the most absolute sense—the second death—because we have had the full benefit of the ransom already imputed to us. There is hope for the world, which knows, as yet, comparatively little or nothing of the grace of God, which has not tasted, has not seen, etc.—there is hope for the members of this class that under the kingdom rule they will be caused to see clearly, and may then respond obediently to the divine arrangement; but if we sin *wilfully* after that we have received a knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins for us—therefore, there would remain no future hope for us. But, on the other hand, let us hope that few of those who have accepted the grace of God are disposed to draw back unto perdition; but are rather disposed to go on and to secure the end of their faith, —glory, honor and immortality, joint heirship in the kingdom. To us who are thus minded the Apostle's words are encouraging, when he says, "If ye, through the spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." The condition upon which we may continue our relationship to the Lord, and our hope for a share in the glories of the first resurrection are thus definitely stated to include mortification of the deeds of the body—restraining the fleshly inclinations, putting them to death, crucifying them, using them up in the service of the Lord and his cause. Such mortification of the deeds of the body, such a battle against the weakness of the flesh, is what the Apostle elsewhere speaks of as the "warfare," when he tells us that the flesh warreth against the spirit, and the spirit in turn warreth against the flesh, for the two are contrary, and will be opponents to the end of life; and if the spirit has been willing, and has fought to the best of its ability against the weaknesses of the flesh, the Lord will count the victory complete, through the merit of the Redeemer.

THE MIND VERSUS THE WILL

We are not to think of this as being the warfare of a fleshly will against a spiritual will, nor the battling of the old nature against the new nature. These are erroneous conceptions, not in accord with the Scriptural delineations. We cannot have two wills and yet be in Christ. We cannot serve two masters. The matter must be decided—it must be settled before we are accepted to membership in the body of Christ. Hence it is, that a full consecration of all that we have and are is necessary to membership in Christ. Henceforth there is only the one will, the will of Christ. As for the will of the flesh, we do not own it to be ours; we ignore it, we oppose it —we are the new creatures; the will of the flesh and, in general, the flesh, are contrary, and thus reckoned by the Lord as well as by us as dead; we must keep the body under—keep it dead; we must not allow a fleshly will to assert itself in us. This does not mean that we can hinder a fleshly desire, but there is a vast difference between a desire and a will. Our flesh may desire various things which we believe the will of God would oppose, but our wills will not consent. Even though through weakness of the flesh an error might have been committed, the will could not have consented so long as it was loyal to the Lord. The new will may have fallen temporarily into a stupor and so have come under the power of the flesh for a time, but as surely as it was the new will it never consented to sin and never *approved* of it.

This, then, is the guide by which we may know our true position, not only at the beginning of the race, but to the end of it; viz., if we are led by the spirit of God—if that is the direction in which we are following, if that is what we are seeking—then we are sons of God; he owns and accepts all who have come unto him through Christ, and who are trusting in the merit of the wedding garment, and who continue in this attitude of heart. These will continue to be owned of the Lord as sons to the end of the present journey to the end of the present time of sacrifice; and beyond he will own them as his sons in the first resurrection, giving them the suitable spirit bodies he has promised them.—Rom. 8:14; 2 Tim. 2:11, 12:1; John 3:2.

"THY KINGDOM COME!"

"For as the earth bringeth forth the bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations."—Isa. 61:11.

Thy kingdom come! Give ear, O King of ages!
This earnest prayer is knocking at thy door;
The church of God with one accord engages
In hopeful pleading till the night is o'er.

Thy kingdom come! We wait the promised glory
That, like the sea, embraces every shore.
We wait the time proclaimed in psalm and story,
When strife shall cease and nations war no more.

Thy kingdom come, and bring its feast of gladness
To groaning creatures wasted by despair;
To dry all faces with the breath of gladness,
And soothe our sorrows with thy love and care.

Thy kingdom come! To darkened minds revealing
The blissful springs of gratitude and praise.
Come, Sun of righteousness, with beams of healing;
Dispense thy light in universal rays.

Thy kingdom come! O, haste the Bride's appearing;
Let every soul her wand of healing feel,—
While all the ransomed of the Lord, revering,
Adore Jehovah, and in homage kneel. —*G. M. Bills*

"GOD MOVES IN A MYSTERIOUS WAY"

ACTS 27:33-44.—JUNE 7.

"Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses."—Psa. 107:6.

Not long after Paul's discourse before Festus and Agrippa, opportunity offered for sending him a prisoner to Rome, in accordance with his own appeal. He was not sent alone, but in company with other prisoners and under a strong guard. The journey from Cæsarea to Rome was by water on merchant vessels, and was probably in the fall of the year, when the storms on the Mediterranean are frequently very severe, sometimes lasting for several days, as in the case mentioned in this lesson. The storm lasted for fourteen days, and was evidently unusually severe. The dangerous season for navigation was reckoned from September 14 to November 14, at which time all navigation in the open sea was suspended for the winter. It is presumed that this storm occurred about September 25.

Doubtless, were we able to look at affairs from God's standpoint, as we will be able to view them by and by, we should see more reason than we now are able to discern why the Apostle's journey to Rome should have been attended with such trying experiences, mental and physical, as were incidental to the shipwreck, wintering on the island of Malta, etc. Possibly the Apostle's faith was being tried; possibly it was being rooted and grounded by these experiences. The Lord had distinctly informed him in a vision that he should go to Rome as his ambassador. He was now on the way, and on several occasions matters looked serious; it seemed as though he would never see the capital of the world; never have the privilege of presenting the truth to the brethren residing there, to whom he had already sent the Epistle to the Romans; never have the opportunity of laboring in their midst, as he had hoped and promised to do.

When in port at Crete a conference was held respecting the wisdom of wintering there or of going on, and the Apostle gave his opinion that it would be unsafe to go on. This may have been the result of some inspiration, but quite possibly was merely the result of his own judgment of the weather, etc. He had already had large experience in seeing disasters, as we are informed in one of his epistles written previous to this time: "Thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep." (2 Cor. 11:25) Besides, his trade as a sailmaker would naturally bring him in contact with sailors, and interest him in all matters pertaining to the craft. Those in command, however, decided to proceed on the journey, and encountered the disastrous storm of our lesson. During those fourteen days the Apostle had abundant opportunity to fear and doubt and question the Lord's providences, and apparently it was not until the night of the thirteenth day of the storm that the Lord sent an angel to the Apostle, with the consoling message that he should not fear—"Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar; and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." (Vs. 24) We may safely assume that the Apostle during these testing days, remained heartily loyal in faith toward God, and that this message at the close was in the nature of an encouragement and an expression of approval.

We may draw a good lesson from this incident, not only in respect to our own affairs in life,—that the Lord may lead in mysterious ways regarding our temporal matters and our service for him and his cause;—but we may additionally apply the lesson in a general way to all spiritual testings and trials. The Lord gives us, for instance, assurances of his love and care, and of the ultimate outcome of the narrow way to all who faithfully follow in the steps of Jesus; but meantime he may permit trials and difficulties of various kinds to come as storms upon us, threatening our very destruction, threatening the overwhelming of our spiritual life, darkening the sky of our hopes with the thunder clouds of our enemies' threats and Satan's roarings. Our duty is to let the eye of faith be undimmed by these various terrible conditions,—to let our hearts be firmly fixed upon him who has promised and who is able also to perform. Thus,

"When the storms of life are raging,
Tempests wild on sea and land,
I will seek a place of refuge
In the shadow of God's hand.

"Enemies may strive to injure,
Satan all his arts employ;
God will turn what seems to harm me
Into everlasting joy."

The expression, "God hath given thee all them that sail with thee," is very meaningful. It reminds us of Abraham's prayer for Sodom—peradventure there were even five righteous persons, God agreed to save the city. There is no suggestion in these words of the "fatherhood of God, and brotherhood of men," as that false teaching is now advocated by many who have a noble impulse. The thought, on the contrary, is that there was only one man on that ship who was in personal relationship to God. The others, whatever their natural traits of character, had never come into personal relationship with the Father. Another thought from the words is that the divine care going with the saints may prove a great blessing to their companions, even though, as in this case, they be worldly and unregenerate. This thought is particularly applicable in the earthly families of God's people. The believing consecrated father or mother is the direct subject of divine care; for of the angels it is written, "They are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation," and, in ministering to these, very frequently (indeed, we may suppose generally) those of their families who have not come into full relationship with the Lord are to some extent included under the protecting care. Elsewhere the Apostle points out that in some respects the believing wife has a blessed influence over her husband; or the believing husband a favorable influence over the wife in regard to the children, else the children would be accounted unholy. (1 Cor. 7:14) This is another illustration of the same general lesson that divine care, though specially for the saints, includes all of their interests of every kind. This does not necessarily imply earthly prosperity, wealth, preservation from accident, shipwreck, etc., as in Paul's case, and yet it does always mean, in some sense and in some degree, an advantage. Let us take from this thought all the comfort we can. All things shall work together for good to the Lord's saints, and those who are nearest and dearest to them will surely be participants to some extent in their interest and in the divine care.

Promptly after receiving the assurances of the safety of all on board, the Apostle made the matter known to the ship's company, and manifested his own faith in the message by cheerfulness and breaking of his fast, and advising all the others to do likewise. His spirit was contagious; they were all cheered, and doubtless they were all impressed not only by the fact to which the Apostle called their attention—namely, that this dis-

aster had come upon them by their failing to follow his advice —but also by the evidence of God's special favor toward him in connection with the knowledge of their ultimate rescue. So it should be with us: whatever we know that is good or comforting or refreshing to ourselves, we should dispense to others. Had the Apostle kept this good news to himself, it would have implied one or two things; either that he did not have faith in its fulfilment, or that he was selfish; but having the Lord's spirit of generosity, as well as large trust in the Lord, he did not hesitate to make known the coming deliverance; and he glorified God in that he did not claim to have this knowledge of himself, but credited it to a revelation. Evidently the prisoner had produced a deep impression upon many of the soldiers and sailors. Who can say that at some future time the Apostle's brave and noble conduct may not have influenced some of his two hundred and seventy-six companions—possibly eventually drawing some of them to the Lord? So it should be with each of us; we should be prompt to tell to others the best tidings we have; sympathy with the groaning creation in the various trials of life should lead us to point to the Lord's promises respecting the coming kingdom and the blessings that should then be to all the families of the earth. Whoever does not thus proclaim daily, on every suitable opportunity, gives evidence either of lack of knowledge or of faith in the revelation or of selfishness, which the Lord cannot approve, and which, persisted in, will ultimately debar him from a share in the kingdom.

Another thought properly connected with this lesson is the absence of any suggestion of a revival service being held on board the boat. Neither Paul nor Luke nor Aristarchus are reported to have made the slightest effort, except as their lives were living epistles. It is barely possible that religious services may not have been permitted on the vessel; but, anyway, we know from the Apostle's general course of conduct, that he did his fishing for men amongst rather different classes. As we understand the matter, the seamen of that day were of a coarse and ignorant class. We cannot doubt that the Apostle would have been glad indeed to have served any of his companions had he found in them the hearing ear—according to the Master's words, "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear." That the sailors were not in a condition to receive or appreciate the Gospel is evident from the lesson; because they were selfishly intent upon using the only small boat available for their escape, and premeditated leaving the soldiers and the prisoners on the vessel. We mark the spirit of selfishness as totally unbecoming in anyone begotten of the spirit of God, and contrast it with the spirit of the Apostle, as generous, loving, considerate of others. A similar test shows us that the soldiers in general were not of a class likely to have a hearing ear, because, when perceiving that the vessel would go to pieces, and that thus some prisoners might escape, they counselled their destruction. "The liberal heart deviseth liberal things," and all of the Lord's consecrated people should not only have the noble impulses coming to them because they are the Lord's and because they have tasted of his grace, and been made partakers of his spirit, but, additionally, they should see to it that this spirit prevails in them; that it is manifest in all the affairs of life. They should see to it that they do not crush out the noble impulses which would properly come to them; that, on the contrary, they foster them and encourage them and develop them more and more. Thus we grow in grace as we grow in knowledge, by obedience to the things which we learn.

The centurion alone seems to have profited by the experiences. He alone seems to have read the Apostle's living epistle to any advantage, and upon him it did make an impression, for while he would not have objected so much to the killing of the other prisoners, who probably were seditious characters and worthy of death, he saw no way to make an exception of Paul, and for Paul's sake, therefore, all the prisoners' lives were spared.

Notwithstanding the Apostle's assurance of the Lord that the lives of the entire ship's company were given him, that all would be saved, he realized the propriety of using all proper diligence in coöperation with the promise. Hence, when he discerned the evident intention of the sailors to escape in the small boat, leaving the passengers, unable to guide the vessel, at the mercy of the sea, he communicated the facts to the centurion, pointing out the necessity of compliance with reasonable precautions to insure the fulfilment of the divine promise. So we all should understand that we have something to do in realizing the gracious promises of God to us. In connection with the affairs of this present life he has promised that our bread and water shall be sure, but this does not imply that we shall neglect reasonable opportunities for securing these. He has promised us also a share in the kingdom by and by; but it is for us to make our calling and our election sure. God is thoroughly capable and thoroughly willing to perform all of his part in connection with every matter, but it is to our advantage that he calls upon us to show our faith by our works—by our coöperation with him in all reasonable ways. He does not expect us to perform miracles; but he does expect us to do what we are able to do both in respect to present things and eternal matters. By and by the Apostle's predictions were fulfilled, and the entire ship's company, some by swimming and others by floating on wreckage, reached the land. We notice again that the Apostle did not propose, on reaching land, to have a general revival service; he was not bent on exciting men's minds, but was practicing the same Gospel methods which the Master taught him; viz., "Let us reason together"—sit down first and count the cost of discipleship, and, if willing to pay the price, "Come, take up thy cross and follow me." If this, the Lord's method for gathering his people from the world, were still pursued, there would be many fewer nominal Christians; but we believe there would be no smaller number of the genuine ones. The time for bringing in the world is not yet; hence the Master's words in prayer, "I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me out of the world, that they all may be one . . . that [ultimately, 'in due time'] the world may believe." The gathering of the elect class for the kingdom is under disadvantageous conditions which will thoroughly test them, and make their way so narrow that few will find it, and still fewer make progress in it. When God's time for dealing with the world shall have come, the powers of heaven and of earth will coöperate with the glorified church in making the Gospel so plain that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein.

So far as the record shows, the Apostle and his companions did no mission work amongst the barbarians of the island on which they were wrecked, nor amongst the soldiers and sailors, their companions during that winter. They left no church there;—we may safely presume that they found no hearing ears. The lesson to us from this should be that we are not to expect the conversion of the world nor anything akin to it. We are to expect that the Lord will find with the truth a sufficient number to complete the elect church, and then, with the power and the authority of the kingdom, establish righteousness and cause the knowledge of himself to fill the earth and bless the whole world through the church.—Gal. 3:29.

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CONVENTIONS ACROSS THE SEA

THE EDITOR ON HIS EUROPEAN JOURNEY.

DEAR WATCH TOWER READERS:—

I posted my previous letter just as our vessel, the *New York*, reached Southampton. As I stepped ashore I was met by Brother Henninges, and a little later, on arrival at London, by a delegation representing the London church. Assuredly our greetings all around were most cordial, and unitedly we thanked God for a safe journey and asked divine blessing upon our mission.

Five meetings were held in London. The first on Saturday afternoon was a greeting and salutation meeting, and in the course of my remarks I mentioned the cordial greetings sent with me by the brethren of the Allegheny congregation; assuring the friends that those greetings well represented the sentiments of all the dear brethren and sisters of America. They in turn wished me to tell you all of their love and to give you their greetings in the Lord, and to testify to you that the Lord's people, though separated by oceans, are of one spirit—begotten of the one Father.

The evening session lasted from 7 to 9; the attendance being about 400 (about the same as in the afternoon). My text was Heb. 6:13-17—respecting the *hope* that is an anchor to our soul and that is based upon God's promise to Abraham, which he confirmed with an oath; so that not only Abraham might have "strong consolation," but we also who look back to that oath-bound Covenant, expecting its fulfilment and trusting by God's grace that we may be heirs of that Covenant's provisions—as Abraham's spiritual "seed." Our hearts rejoiced in the Apostle's assurance, "If ye be Christ's (mem-

bers or bride) then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29) We saw clearly that if we are heirs of that promise it is still unfulfilled, and our faith laid fresh hold of the promise and oath of God, and we assured ourselves not only that it could not fail of fulfilment, but that our Lord's glorification as the head of the "seed," as the antitypical Isaac, was an additional guarantee that soon the church, as the antitypical Rebekah, would be united to him and the promise proceed to complete fulfilment—the blessing of all the families of the earth under the Millennial kingdom.

On Sunday we had three sessions: at 11 a. m., 3 p. m. and 7 p. m. The attendance in the morning was estimated at 400, in the afternoon at 600 and in the evening at 800. The dear friends of the N. London congregation provided a bountiful luncheon at 6 p. m. on Saturday as well as Sunday: all were cordially invited to partake. The number participating on Sunday evening—about 300—fairly represented the deeply interested of London and surrounding cities and towns.

Our text on Sunday morning was Phil. 4:8, 7. The church rather than the public was addressed, and the "way of the Lord" made as plain as possible: (1) The way in which we first saw ourselves to be sinners. (2) Our first view of Christ as our Savior, and our *justification* through Christ in his blood. (3) Our consecration, begetting to the new nature as members of the elect. (4) Our experiences after we thus as new creatures entered the school of Christ. (5) The trials and polishings by the way to fit and prepare us for the kingdom—to polish us as the Lord's jewels. (6) The assistance of the brethren in the good way by words and example—our Elder Brother's being first and Brother Paul's next.

The afternoon session was devoted to questions: this being deemed the most practical way of reaching topics in which the brethren were most deeply interested. Two hours were thus spent—profitably, we trust, to all. Many of the questions indicated deep thought on the subjects dear to us all.

The closing session of the London Convention was well attended—notwithstanding an all-day rain. The interest was excellent, as indicated by the close attention given for two hours by people of whom nearly one-half had little or no previous knowledge of the truth.

Our topic on this occasion was: "Millennial Hopes and Prospects." At the close nearly an hour was spent giving and receiving cordial farewells and good wishes. Would that our pen were capable of delineating the words of earnest greeting—the loving glances of the eyes and the earnest pressure of the hand. We assured the dear friends that we accepted their warm words and many kind acts as first of all to the Lord, who has given us all the precious truths which so rejoice all who have the hearing ear of faith. That, secondly, I was welcomed and loved as a representative of the Lord's people rejoicing in present truth—not only in America but throughout the world. That, thirdly, I accepted a portion of their love and greetings personally—as a servant and representative of the Lord and his people. (And this is uniformly my course and view.)

On Tuesday (April 28) we took up our journey for Denmark and Sweden—a journey of over two thousand miles—to meet our dear Scandinavian friends, whom not having seen we loved as brethren in Christ. Representatives of the London assembly escorted us to the railway depot and bade us Godspeed, hoping to see us yet again before our return to America. Brother Henninges accompanies me and is a real comfort and true yokefellow in every way. The Lord reward him!

Our first stop was at Copenhagen: We were met at the depot with a most cordial welcome and escorted to comfortable lodgings. The notice of our coming had brought brethren and sisters from various directions who awaited our coming and, with the local brethren, almost overwhelmed us with the evidences of their love and fellowship. Although our communications were through a brother who served as interpreter, yet eyes and hand-clasps added emphasis.

We had three meetings in this great city—two of these were semi-public, including not only the friends of the truths represented by ZION'S WATCH TOWER publications, but their Christian friends whom they had been endeavoring to interest. The largest attendance was about 200—very good indeed for a mid-week meeting.

Continuing our journey we reached Stockholm on Sunday morning, May 3—the dear leader of the Danish meetings accompanying us. As we alighted from the train we were met by about ten Swedish brethren—amongst them the two dear brethren who for some time past have been colporteuring in these parts and whose efforts God is blessing. A hasty wash and we were off for the meeting place, where we found a crowded roomful of Swedish brethren and sisters singing most heartily an old and familiar tune in words which we could not understand. But the circumstances and earnestness and illuminated faces all told us that the unknown tongue gave praise to the same God, inspired by the same hopes built upon the same promises. We began at once our address—a dear brother (once a minister in the Swedish State Church) serving as interpreter, repeating our words in Swedish, sentence by sentence.

For two hours we discussed the oath-bound covenant, hope in which constitutes the anchor of our faith as the Lord's brethren and joint-heirs. The moist eyes and nods of assent told clearly that the truths were recognized and appreciated and that many of those present were sincerely desirous of making their calling and election sure as "heirs according to the promise," as joint-heirs with Christ Jesus our Lord.—Gal. 3:29.

Our second public meeting was at 5:30 p. m. Sunday, and lasted until nearly 8 o'clock. About 250 were present and the closest attention was given to our presentation of the "Millennial Hopes and Prespects." Some of the audience—about one-half—were outsiders not fully committed to present truth. They were seemingly sincere Christians, however, and we may reasonably hope that some of them may yet be blessed by the Lord through these or other instrumentalities;—that they may be enabled to "comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God which passeth all knowledge."—Eph. 3:18.

Monday's meetings at 11 a. m. to 1, and 3:30 to 6, were attended by about 100 each. These doubtless are all deeply interested, even though some may not as yet be fully committed. The topics of these meetings related to the steps of discipleship; the conditions for entering and continuance in the narrow way to "glory, honor and immortality." Our heart was much encouraged by hearing from two, who could speak English, that they had discerned the way they had long been seeking, and had made a full consecration of their all to the Lord and were rejoicing accordingly.

We may hope that there were more, for some of the dear friends spoke most eloquently with their eyes, and by all their actions indicated that they longed to talk with us. One dear brother caught our hand in both of his and looked us in the face with moist eyes, and then, pointing to his mouth, shook his head; then he pointed to his eyes and then to his forehead;—then he looked heavenword, then pressed our hand afresh in both of his. Thus he told us, as forcibly as could words in any language: I cannot speak to tell you of my joy of heart, but the eyes of my mind have been opened and now I can see our heavenly Father in his true light and can understand his wonderful plan, and I want to thank you because it was through your instrumentality that our Father sent me this priceless blessing.

We have just left these dear brethren and sisters on our return journey to fill appointments in Great Britain. About twenty-five or thirty came to the depot in the rain to see us off. Impressive were the handshakes of these dear friends who, though poor, purchased railway tickets so as to get on to the platform to see the last of us. Through the interpreter they said, We fear that we do not and cannot show you how much we love you in the Lord and how much we appreciate the privileges of this Convention.

One dear Swedish sister, a school teacher (able to speak English), who has had the truth for only about one year and a half, but during that time has done much to present it to others, came to meet us at Copenhagen, went with us to Stockholm and returned with us to Copenhagen and went home after seeing us off. As we finally parted, she handed us some flowers, saying, "These are not from me but from all the dear Swedish friends of the truth. I was the first of them to meet you and now I am the last of them to bid you farewell and Godspeed—so accept these flowers, please, as a token of our Christian love for you and the work the Lord has given you to do." This dear sister, a hard worker, traveled in all over 700 miles to enjoy and feast upon the truth and to show her love for it. Can it be wondered if I write now: I shall never forget my visit to Scandinavia, and shall ever pray and seek for the Lord's blessing upon his work there.

* * *

Journeying from Stockholm by rail to Malmö (375 miles) and by sea (15 miles) brought us back to Copenhagen, where we again bade good-bye to our Danish friends. Thence by rail we reached Korsör (70 miles), where we again took ship for Kiel (100 miles). Here we saw the German Emperor's war yacht and about twenty-four German war vessels, and rejoiced in spirit that ere long they will be remelted, that their tons of metal may be used in peaceable pursuits under the administration of the great Prince of Peace. From Kiel

a rail journey (500 miles) brought us to Flushing, where we again took steamer (115 miles) to Queensboro pier and were again on British soil. The rail journey to London (50 miles) was through the most highly cultivated country we saw on our entire journey or anywhere. It seemed a picture of what Paradise restored will shortly be.

On our first arrival in England we added to our itinerary several intermediate appointments. One of these was Leeds, our next stopping place, which we reached after a journey of 250 miles. The dear friends met us at the depot, greeting us most cordially;—our arrival was delayed, and they had waited all afternoon. The weather was damp and chilly, but not so their ardor, nor ours. We felt at home with them at once. After tea we proceeded to the Y. M. C. A. hall and for an hour and a half addressed a very intelligent audience of about 125 on "The Oath-bound Covenant" of Heb. 6:17. A special supper had been arranged, at which a goodly company gathered, and after a refreshing night's rest we started for Glasgow (200 miles)—a happy party escorting us to the train and sending kindest greetings to the "brethren in America."

Glasgow was one of our stopping places in 1891, when we hunted up some six TOWER subscribers. Now, on the arrival of the train, thirty dear brethren and sisters were on the platform and greeted us most enthusiastically—assuring us of the love of others not able to be present. We had heard that the Scotch were undemonstrative, and very averse to "wearing their heart on their sleeve," but the warmth of our reception convinced us that the Scotch had been misrepresented, or else that the "love of the truth" had greatly transformed these dear friends, who, by their hands and faces, no less than by their words, so enthusiastically welcomed us. We were most hospitably entertained, and pray for the divine blessing upon our hosts and their families. This was Friday evening, and the church's committee of arrangements (8) called on us to submit suggestions of details for the Convention, not previously arranged by mail. Our fellowship was most pleasant and both opened and closed with prayer.

The Saturday morning program consisted of interesting reports from various little companies of believers in Scotland presented by representatives. They were most interesting and showed clearly that not only in Glasgow, but in every direction thereabouts, the truth is extending and under God's blessing is finding the Israelites indeed. We addressed the dear friends briefly on this occasion, congratulating them on the many evidences of God's favor and blessing upon them, pointing out that the keynote of the present movement is, "Gather together my *saints* unto *me;* those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." We rally not around a sectarian standard or name or creed, but to the Lord. We who are united to Christ need not creeds or other human bonds to unite us—our union with the head means union with all united to him and love for all such in proportion as each has or attains the Lord's spirit. We assured the dear friends that we brought greetings to all of like precious faith from brethren in America, and that your thoughts and prayers were surely with us.

The afternoon discourse was on "The Oath-bound Covenant" (Heb. 6:13-17), and that of the evening on "The exceeding great and precious promises." (2 Pet. 1:4-11) These we showed to be the church's share in the Abrahamic Covenant. The attendance for a week-day was excellent—about 400 at each session.

Sunday was the great day of our spiritual feasting with our Lord (in prayer and praise and the study of his Word) and with each other as fellow-heirs of the promises. The opening session was a general testimony meeting. One after another told the story which we all know from experience, but which we are always glad to hear afresh—of God's grace and providential leading into the clearer light of present truth. Several of the dear colporteurs were heard from at this meeting, and their testimony was like that of all others,—of their own blessing, and of their joy in the service notwithstanding occasional discouragements. We took occasion again to express our joy that the Lord had been pleased to use our humble efforts, but gave the glory to the Lord, pointing out that "of his fullness have all we received, and favor upon favor;"—that the due time had come for the fuller light to illuminate the divine Word and therefore it was sent of the Lord for all Israelites indeed; and that any little trials and sufferings and sacrifices which had come to us incidentally to the serving of the truth to the household of faith had been far more than compensated for in the blessings and favors and privileges granted us in the present time, besides the promised share in the kingdom glories. The discourse following was on the greatness of God's power working in his saints. (Eph. 1:19) We saw the divine power exercised through the Word of promise and his grace sufficient for all trials and to bring off conquerors all his faithful. We saw also his power to do for us and with us in the future—raising us up to glory and using us then to bless the world.

At the Sunday afternoon session Brother Henninges addressed the Convention, his topic being "Consecration," from Prov. 23:26. Close attention was given while he pointed out the consecration of Abraham and the other worthies of the past, and then that of our Lord and his apostles, and brought home the lesson to all that only by full self-surrender to the Lord can any hope to attain divine favor and everlasting life.

The Sunday evening service (from 6:30 to 9 p. m.) was the most largely attended session of the Convention and its closing one. About 1,000 were present, and the close attention given by many for so long a session leads us to hope that some hearts and heads were reached by the truth. We cannot hope that all or even many of those who heard had an "ear to hear" or "an understanding heart"; but we do hope that audiences so remarkable for intelligence as were these of Glasgow received some thoughts respecting the divine plan of salvation which they will never forget, even though but few of them may be finally of the very elect who shall eventually as "overcomers" "make their calling and election sure," Quite a number of medical men were present, doubtless through respect to one of the brethren, who is a very prominent physician—a professor in the medical college here and one of the two chief surgeons in the Glasgow hospital.

Monday was spent with friends in the suburbs of Glasgow most delightfully, resting and attending to correspondence. In the evening we were joined by over sixty of the Glasgow church, who spent three hours with us—a sociable and farewell visit which closed with prayer for the Lord's continued favor upon the church here and upon us in our further journeying and ministering and upon all the dear Israel of God—known to us and unknown. The dear friends requested us to extend their greetings and hearty good wishes to the Allegheny church and to all the "brethren of like precious faith." About twenty-eight of the Glasgow friends intend an (80 miles) excursion to Edinburgh to visit the church there at the time of our visit—there to bid us a final good-bye. They urge, however, that we come again when the seventh volume of DAWN shall have been prepared,—for we assured them that we could not at present consider it the Lord's will that we should make so long a journey until the DAWN series is completed. Having a day at our disposal, we have accepted an invitation north, at Dundee, prior to our Edinburgh engagements—Wednesday and Thursday, May 13 and 14. *En route* to the railway depot we met "Aunt Sarah," who wished us to visit her "shop," in the rear portion of which the Glasgow church had its start in a Dawn Circle of about four to six persons. We took a cup of tea there and ate some of a fruit cake baked for us by another sister upon the first TOWER announcement of our visit. Some who could not come to Edinburgh gathered at the depot to bid us farewell (30). As the train started they were still singing—"God be with you till we meet again." Our hearts and theirs were full. We remembered our Lord's promise in Matt. 19:29, and realized its fulfilment afresh. Praise his name!

At Dundee station we were met and heartily welcomed by six of the friends—just one-half of the total number interested. Sixty-one gathered for the one meeting which our time permitted there. Close attention was given us for two hours while we endeavored to show the exceeding riches of God's grace to us-ward, set forth in the Oath-bound Covenant. We hope later to know of some fruitage. We were most hospitably entertained and started early the following morning, May 13th, for Edinburgh.

We reached Edinburgh shortly after noon and were met at the station with a most cordial welcome by representatives of the church. The grand city was in commotion and gala dress in honor of a state visit of the King; nevertheless our first evening session was well attended and close attention was given to our presentation of "The Oath-bound Covenant." The meeting on Thursday at 3 p. m. was chiefly for the deeply interested. Our topic was, "The Losses and Gains of Christ's Followers," from Phil, 3:7-14. Then followed a luncheon—sandwiches, cakes and tea—served by the Edinburgh church and shared by nearly a hundred. Next came our closing public service, the topic being "Millennial Hopes and Prospects." At 9:45 we were at the railway station with a delegation of the local church to bid farewell to the thirty-four visiting Glasgow brethren and sisters. This was a general farewell and again "God be with you till we meet again" was sung with zest. We will never forget our Scotch brethren and their urgent request that we come again. As evidencing the zeal of dear friends here we mention that quite a number came as

far as 400 miles' journey to attend this convention; and one dear sister (from Shetland Islands, north of Scotland) when bidding us good-bye, said, "I am sure that not many came so far to see the King as I have come to meet you; I have travelled by land and sea for two days and two nights to get here, and now it will take two days and two nights to reach home again." We assured the dear sister of our deep appreciation of her Christian love, and that we accepted the compliment not personally, but as a mark of her love for the great King of kings, who has honored us in permitting us to dispense present truth—the harvest message—now in its due time.

Faithfully, your brother and servant in the Lord,

CHARLES T. RUSSELL.

THE APOSTLE PAUL AT ROME

ACTS 28:16-24, 30, 31—JUNE 14.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"*I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.*"—Rom. 1:16.

Doubtless the favorable impression made by the Apostle Paul upon the centurion who brought him prisoner to Rome—the evidence which the latter had on the journey, in the storm, in the shipwreck, and subsequently during the stay at Malta—combined with the favorable letter sent by Festus to Cæsar explaining that the charges against the Apostle were evidently the results of religious hatred, etc., secured for him very different treatment from that usually accorded to prisoners sent to Rome. He was treated as a prisoner to the extent that he was continually chained to a guard, a Roman soldier, responsible for his appearance whenever demanded. These guards were changed every few hours, so that, on the whole, probably a considerable number of the garrison had personal contact with the Apostle, knew his manner of living most intimately, and many of them must have heard his teaching and preaching to the numbers of Jews and Christians who visited him. It is surmised—not without grounds, we think,—that some of these soldiers, who were subsequently sent to Great Britain, carried the Gospel thither. Certain it was that the Apostle's life was a living epistle which cannot have been without its effect, either for the blessing or the hardening of those with whom he came in contact—to some a savor of life unto life; to others a savor of death unto death—according as they received or rejected the knowledge and light. The same should be true of all the Lord's followers to the extent of their abilities and opportunities; each should let his light so shine as to glorify the Father. Business acquaintances, social friends, neighbors, relatives,—all should know exactly where we stand on all questions of righteousness, as well as what is the foundation for our faith and hopes.

We are informed that Paul dwelt in his own hired house —more properly apartments, not necessarily an entire building. The expenses of maintaining such a residence, where numbers of people could be invited, must have been considerable, and evidently the Apostle did not here continue his trade of tent-making. It is possible that his necessities were supplied by his friends at Rome and elsewhere: it is possible also that by this time, in the Lord's providence, he had inherited a considerable patrimony from his father's estate. The lesson in this particular is that God is able to supply all of our real needs in one way or another. It is for us to do with our might what our hands find to do, using our time and strength and talents in the Lord's service to the best of our judgment, and leaving all arrangements as well as results in his hand. No doubt it was to the Apostle's advantage that for a time he was left in penury and found it necessary to labor, working with his hands for life's necessities while he was preaching the good tidings. Thus he demonstrated his loyalty to the Lord, to the truth, to the brethren, to principle; and thus he set us an example along these lines which, doubtless, has since been profitable to many of the Lord's followers.

Paul had a considerable number of kinsmen and acquaintances in Rome, the number of whom we know was at least over thirty-two according to the salutations of his epistle written to them previously at Corinth. (Rom. 16:1-15) Doubtless these were informed of the Apostle's arrival and visited him speedily. But our lesson calls our attention particularly to the Apostle's energy in seeking to be about the Master's business,—seeking to make known the good tidings to those who as yet had not heard it. Three days after his arrival in Rome he sent forth an invitation requesting the leading Jews there to visit him. We can learn a good lesson from this in harmony with the Apostle's words, "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Our chief business, like his, should be the Lord's service; the comfortable fixing of our abode and our fellowship with our friends and relatives should not occupy the most important part of our time. We should remember the Apostle's words, "This one thing I do"; and applying them to ourselves we should be "instant [unceasingly] in season and out of season [when convenient and when inconvenient to ourselves]" in our service of our Lord and his cause.

The Jews accepted the invitation and visited the Apostle: doubtless they came readily for several reasons. First, all the Jews residing in Rome had been subject to persecution, which had some three years previously driven Aquila and Priscilla from the city. This persecution had now to some extent abated, but doubtless it had left the hearts of the Jews in a much humbler condition than they would otherwise have been. Persecutions certainly have their value to the Lord's people; they help to make us tender-hearted, compassionate and sympathetic with others, as well as help to polish and develop us in Christian character. Secondly, the Jews were, doubtless, interested in a fellow-countryman in distress, and specially interested in one whom they found to be so peculiarly treated by the Roman government—one granted so great liberty as Paul enjoyed. The Lord's providence was certainly in this matter, and the Apostle's peculiar form of restraint was evidently favorable to the cause he represented. The Jews would certainly beware how they would raise a commotion against one who, though a prisoner, was treated with such consideration, and one who was under the direct protection of a soldier, and for violence to whom they would be directly responsible to Julius, who is supposed to have been the prefect of the Prætorium, or "captain of the guard," of that time—a man of good repute. It was while a prisoner in his own house that the Apostle found favorable opportunity for writing several of his epistles—to the Philippians, to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Colossians. Doubtless the two years spent in prison in Cæsarea were valuable to the Apostle himself, as giving him more abundant opportunity for further study of the divine plan than he could have enjoyed while engaged continually in the mission work. Now this added experience and grasp of the Gospel found their expression in the epistles referred to and were communicated to the church at Rome. We should remember, too, that Rome was the very center of influence at that time, that from it influences radiated in every direction. Thus we see the Lord's guidance in the Apostle's affairs, and applying the lesson to ourselves it impresses upon us his assurance that "all things shall work together for good to those who love God, to the called ones according to his purpose." Consoled with this promise we can endure trials and disappointments, even though at the time we cannot see how such experiences will ever work good. Thus we learn that

"Faith can firmly trust him,
Come what may."

To the chief Jews who visited him the Apostle explained briefly the cause of the opposition of the Jews, the necessity of his appeal to Cæsar and the assurance that he had naught whereof to accuse his own nation. His nobility of character is prominently before us at every turn of his affairs. How many less noble minds would have felt embittered against their own nation! How many would have charged the rulers of it in immoderate terms for their injustice, hypocrisy, etc.! We love the Apostle all the more because we discern in his course the true, noble, Christian spirit and principle. Let us seek to emulate his example, not only in respect to what we shall say of earthly laws and rulers, but let us also apply the same rule to all who seek to do us injury; let us not render evil for evil and railing for railing, but let us remember how it is written of our Lord that "when he was reviled he reviled not again."

Mark the wisdom of the Apostle in handling his subject: He not only showed no unkindness of sentiment toward those who had been the cause of his imprisonment, but he declared to his hearers that he was bearing his bondage because of the hope of Israel. He was not seeking for their sympathy; he was seeking to turn their hearts to the Lord. Hence, as soon as possible in his narrative he directed their attention to this central fact, that Israel had a hope, and that it was because of his loyalty to Israel and Israel's hope that he was suffering imprisonment.

Kindness often begets kindness (though not always), and the Jews responded in most considerate terms that they knew

nothing against the Apostle and that they would be pleased to hear his story from his own lips. They admitted, however, that they had some prejudice against the doctrines he advocated because they had heard unfavorable reports concerning Christianity—that "everywhere it is spoken against."

The nearer we approach to the truth the more likely we are to find numerous enemies. Good men and bad men may have both friends and enemies, but it is reserved to the pure Gospel and those who uphold it to be *everywhere* spoken against—to have few zealous friends outside its own little consecrated band; but it will not always be so. It is so now because we are still living in an epoch known spiritually as "this present evil world" (Gal. 1:4), and because Satan is the god of this world, who now worketh in the children of disobedience, blinding their eyes to the truth and constraining them to hate the light and oppose it. By and by Satan will be bound, and his deluded subjects will have the eyes of their understanding opened (Isa. 35:5; Rev. 20:1): "then shall ye return"—turn about—see things from the divine standpoint, and discern between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not—discern a marked difference from the present time—that evil doers will suffer, and that those who do the will of the Lord will be greatly blessed and no longer be everywhere spoken against.

The Apostle did not attempt to preach the Gospel at this first interview, but simply introduced himself and his message and made an appointment for a future meeting, at which, according to the Greek text, a great number gathered, to whom he expounded the matter, testifying the kingdom of God and persuading them concerning Jesus—from morning until evening. We can imagine the substance of this long discourse: it evidently was along the same lines as our Lord's words to the two with whom he went to Emmaus after his resurrection, when he opened unto them the Scriptures—showing the types of the law, the necessity for an antitypical sin-offering and the necessity for an antitypical Prophet, Priest and King; the predictions of the prophets concerning these things; the words of David, of Isaiah, of Jeremiah, of Zechariah, Joel, etc. etc. Doubtless too the Apostle gave an account of the purity of our Lord's life and teachings and narrated the facts proving his resurrection, and his own witness that the Lord was no longer a man, but a glorious being, whose presence when seen by the Apostle shone above the brightness of the sun at noonday. Doubtless, too, he pointed out the high calling of the church, and that this opportunity for becoming spiritual Israel was accorded first of all to fleshly Israel; and that the Gentiles, nevertheless, according to the words of the prophets, would be called in to fill up, to complete the elect number that God had predestinated to this glory. Doubtless he showed that the call involved suffering, sacrifice and self-denial now on the part of those who would share in the glories of the heavenly kingdom as it will be established at the second coming of Messiah, and the resurrection of the church, which is his body.

As is always the case, the truth proved a separator, and we are not surprised to find that among those who were interested enough, and curious enough, to desire to hear the Apostle, some believed and some disbelieved. The truth in the harvest time of this age has a similar effect: it is a sickle which both gathers the wheat to the garner and separates the tares. Paul was not responsible for the effect of the truth upon his hearers. He earnestly desired to do them good, and used his very best endeavors to present the truth wisely, but the responsibility lay then with the hearers, not with Paul, nor with the Lord. It is the Lord's intention that the truth shall attract only the one class—the pure in heart, the Israelites indeed—and that it should separate and antagonize those who are not in the right condition of heart, but are moved even in their religious devotions by selfishness. So we find matters today; not all are ready for the present truth. Some who are noble and generous in many respects have a prejudice of mind, or heart, which hinders them from being able to receive the good tidings. With some it is love of the sect, or party, with which they are identified, and whose teachings must be more or less antagonistic to the truth because of the error they contain; with others the difficulty is the fear of man, which bringeth a snare—the fear of greater unpopularity and the realization that faithfulness to the Gospel of Christ would mean self-sacrifice. The Lord is using just such testings now as then to separate the wheat from the tares, the gold from the dross. We can not expect that he will do otherwise for us or for any, and our prayers and endeavors must be in the direction of thorough honesty with the Lord, with the brethren and with his truth—the love of the truth being above all things else. The Lord's declaration respecting the class that will fall in this time of testing is that he will send them strong delusion, that they will believe a lie, because they received not the truth in the love of it.—2 Thess. 2:10, 11.

The good work thus promptly and thoroughly begun, we doubt not, was continued by the Apostle with fervency during the remainder of the two years he was a prisoner. He was not privileged to go out and make public discourses in Rome, for at that time the Emperor was not only the head of everything social and political, but also the ecclesiastical head of the world, and any new religion would be under special restraint in Rome, the seat of the imperial government. Hence, in all probability Paul's condition as a prisoner—at liberty to receive all who would come to him—was the best not only for him, but for the cause he represented. We are reminded here that some are kept prisoners at home by family duties, or illness, or other bonds of obligation or necessity, and that where such conditions prevail the Lord's people should both pray and expect that the Lord would bring to them such as might be benefitted by their ministries of the truth. Let us each be zealous to use our opportunities, whether our advantages be great or small, and let us rely upon it that the Lord knows our condition and is able to change it according to his good pleasure and wisdom. Under the existing conditions, no one was able to forbid the Apostle, or to restrain him, from speaking with the utmost confidence and boldness the truths pertaining to the Lord Jesus and the kingdom of God which he would establish at his second advent—the present Gospel age being for the selection and polishing and testing of those who will be joint-heirs with him in that kingdom. Let us be faithful and let us see to it that our ministries, both public and private, be along these lines—that we do not permit any other gospel to take the place of this one which the Lord has committed to us. We note incidentally that we are living in a day of many gospels—the gospel of socialism, the gospel of health by proper living, the gospel of faith cures, mind cures, hypnotic cures, etc.; the gospel of various sciences; the gospel of the power of the will, etc., etc. Whatever their advocates may say about these gospels, let us remember that none of these is the Gospel which the Lord and his apostles committed to us; let us inquire for the old paths and let us keep them faithfully until by and by we shall hear the Master's words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord." Then we shall know as we are known; then we shall understand much better than the various theories of the present time could possibly instruct us. If we win the great prize it must be, in any event, at the cost of our present earthly lives; and, hence, the gospel of health is in some respects in direct antagonism to the gospel of sacrifice which we preach. By this we do not mean that the Lord's people should be negligent of health; but we do mean that it should in their estimation be so secondary to the Gospel of God's dear Son and the glory to be attained through him and through association in his sacrifice, that earthly life and earthly health and earthly physical development should be loss and dross in comparison.

Here the narrative of the Apostle's work ends. Tradition tells us that the Apostle was liberated at the end of the two years; that he again visited the churches of Asia Minor and, subsequently, made a visit to Spain, preaching the Gospel; and that later on he came to Rome again a prisoner without favor, and that he suffered martyrdom after spending a considerable time imprisoned in the Mamertine prison, a dread dungeon in Rome. Tradition says that his Roman citizenship saved him from crucifixion, and that he was, instead, decapitated. St. Paul's Cathedral at Rome is said to have been built near the site of his execution.

It was probably during this latter imprisonment that the Apostle wrote his epistles to Timothy and Titus, in one of which (2 Tim. 4:7, 8) he declares, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also who love his appearing." As we note the noble character of this dear brother in the Lord, we all desire to emulate it and thus to be copies of the Lord Jesus. And now we have approached, we believe, close to the termination of the narrow way, close to the time when we hope to hear the Master's "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Let us, therefore, be encouraged the more to buckle on tightly the armor, and to fight the good fight faithfully to the close, that we may with the Apostle share the crown of rejoicing which the Lord has promised to all who love him supremely—even unto death.

PAUL'S CHARGE TO TIMOTHY

2 TIM. 3:14-4:8.—JUNE 21.

"There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

A dreadful conflagration burst forth in the City of Rome a few months after Paul was set at liberty, which laid waste a large area of the city during the six days it continued. Nero, the Emperor, "enjoyed the dreadful sight from a turret of his palace, singing and dancing the mime of the 'burning of Troy' during the progress of the national catastrophe." It was rumored that Nero himself caused the fire, and to avert suspicion he had it charged to innocent Christians, of whom, it would appear, there was a considerable number by that time. Christians, being unpopular with their heathen as well as their Jewish neighbors, were made the scapegoats, and they suffered dreadfully. One very careful account says: "Multitudes of every age, of every sex, were arrested. They were slain with the sword; they were exposed in amphitheaters; they were covered with the skins of wild beasts to be torn to pieces by dogs; they were wrapped in sheets of pitch, tied to stakes and set on fire. Nero drove among the people in his chariot, lighted by the flare of these hideous human torches."

The Lord's faithful of today ought to be prepared to suffer similarly for the truth, whether called upon to do so or not. It seems improbable that anything so dreadful should occur in our enlightened day; and yet we have various Scriptural reasons for expecting that within ten years all who stand faithfully and boldly for the truth will suffer to a considerable extent—some of them quite probably even unto death. What charge could be brought against them? We answer, The same charge that could be brought against their brethren of Paul's day—they are unpopular; the world hates them; their loyalty to truth and principle will hinder them from being highly esteemed among men, and probably make them the scapegoat of evil-doers.

It was about two years after this conflagration and persecution that the Apostle was arrested, imprisoned, and, very shortly after, beheaded; and it was while waiting in his prison that he wrote his second epistle to Timothy, who was, apparently, at the time with the church at Ephesus—where tradition says he remained until his own martyrdom, which probably occurred about thirty years later, in A. D. 96. Our lesson is based upon extracts from this letter to Timothy; it urges him with Mark to visit him at Rome, but he was beheaded before they reached there. The grandeur of the sentiments expressed, the confidence and hope, can be appreciated only when we remember the circumstances bearing upon the Apostle at the time they were written. Realizing that he had come to the end of his own course, he sought to impress as much as possible of his own spirit and zeal upon Timothy—that he might be the more faithful and efficient servant of God. The exhortation is specially applicable to all who seek in any manner to minister to others—and this really includes all of the Lord's people, each one of whom should be a living epistle showing forth and speaking forth the Lord's message as his ambassador. Let us each apply to himself the words of this lesson.

Timothy is first reminded of how great his privileges had been—that he was well born. under religious instruction from his infancy. He is reminded, too, in a most modest manner, of how he had received his understanding of the Scriptures through the Apostle, and had been assured that the instructions were of God—that the Apostle spoke as an oracle of God; "He that heareth us, heareth God." The Apostle points to the Word of God as a great light, or lamp, able to make wise unto salvation. He must have referred chiefly to the Old Testament, since the New Testament was not yet completed; but no one will doubt that if the Old Testament is valuable for the instruction of the Lord's people, the New Testament is still more valuable as its key and elucidation. The Apostle's words give the thought that these divine instructions are for the purpose of making the Lord's people wise unto salvation,—of showing them how they may please God and be acceptable to him under the terms of his covenant. However, the Apostle carefully guards the matter by indicating that such wisdom cannot be unto salvation except through the faith that is in Christ Jesus. Christ Jesus must be recognized as the antitypical Prophet, Priest and King, and must have reverence and obedience as such to the extent of our ability, else there can be no salvation. Ours is not a Gospel of works merely, but a Gospel of faith, which acknowledges that we cannot perform the works which we recognize to be perfect, but must needs have the merit of our Redeemer imputed to us.

We live in a time when the Bible is more generally in the hands of the people than ever before, but in a time when its inspiration is more generally doubted than it has been for centuries. Only a short time ago the opponents of the Bible, Paine, Voltaire, Ingersoll, *et al.*, were called infidels; but today its opponents and traducers are found in the majority of the pupils of Christendom, and in the Professors' chairs of nearly all its colleges and seminaries. This recent view holds the Bible to be worthy of reverence because of its age, but not as a revelation from God; it places the Bible alongside of Shakespeare, and draws comparisons in favor of the latter; it attempts to question not only the inspiration of the book, but even its reliability as history. So virulent is this attack that the faith of all Christendom is being shaken to its foundation, and our expectation is that within ten years there will be a distinct cleavage between those who accept the Word of God and those who reject it, and that amongst those professing the name of Christian the unbelievers will be a hundred-fold more numerous than the believers. This will form a part of the great falling away predicted for that day: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

The best proofs respecting the inspiration of the Scriptures are to be found on the inside—in the divine plan of the ages which it records with such grand harmony. The trouble with the higher critics is that they do not see this internal evidence, but, on the contrary, have accepted the incongruous and unreasonable theories of the dark ages which misrepresent the real teachings of the Bible, and these higher critics are now showing the book (which they believe to be full of inconsistencies) from the outside—endeavoring to prove that it was not written by the people whose names are attached to its various parts. To those who see the divine plan which the book contains, these arguments of the higher critics respecting the authorship of the parts are of little weight; for it matters not to us who wrote the books, so long as we see they contain the elements of a divine plan so stupendously grand that we are confident no human mind conceived it or could have depicted it.

That the Apostle was a firm believer in the inspiration of the Scriptures is evidenced by his declaration, found in this lesson, to the effect that "all Scripture [holy writings] given by inspiration of God, is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for rebuke, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect [complete], thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

In harmony with this testimony of Paul respecting *inspired* writings, we have the words of the Apostle Peter assuring us that holy men of old spoke as they were moved by the holy spirit. (2 Pet. 1:21) It seems difficult for some to understand how this inspiration could be, and yet the individuality of the writer be maintained. The matter, however, becomes very clear and simple when we consider that God was able to inspire the sentiments and leave much of the clothing of those sentiments to the judgment and taste and mannerism of the prophet, merely overruling where necessary to hinder any misstatement which might prove injurious, and to secure an exactly proper statement of a necessary item.*

How true are the Apostle's words that the teachings of this wonderful book are profitable! What other book ever so inspired us with hopes and joys eternal, and of newness of life in order to attain this? What other book ever proved valuable to so large a number for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness?—None. The value of all other books is in proportion to their fidelity to the teachings of this Book of books. What is true of teachers is true also of books written by teachers: "If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."—Isa. 8:20.

Not only can no man of God be "complete and thoroughly furnished unto every good work" without the assistance of the Bible, but it is admitted even by worldly men that no man's education is complete without a considerable knowledge of this wonderful Book. The Lord's people who are growing in grace and in knowledge are daily becoming more convinced of their need of the instructions which flow from this Book, by whatever silver tongues and helping hands of explanatory writings the interpretation may come.

After thus laying down the foundation of Timothy's established faith, and after thus urging him to abide, or continue, in those things which he had learned, the Apostle proceeds to deliver his dying charge. He sets the matter forth in a most solemn form, according to the Greek—"I adjure thee [I most solemnly urge upon you, therefore] before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." We may accept these urgent words from the Apostle as applicable to ourselves. We

* We refer the reader to MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I, especially to Chap. 3, "The Bible as a Divine Revelation, Viewed in the Light of Reason."

also, stand before God; we, also, are trusting in his favor for eternal life; we, also, are adopted into his family, and as sons are hoping to have such experiences as will fit and prepare us for the glorious things the Father has promised to them that love him. We also, have respect to the Lord Jesus and his appearing and kingdom—hoping to have a share with him in those future glories and grand opportunities. We, also, remember that that Kingdom is to judge the world, and to judge the fallen angels—the latter, the quick, the living, who have never passed into death, but are restrained by chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day; the former, the race of mankind to which we belong by nature, children of wrath even as others, all of whom are dead, under sentence of death. Hoping for a share in all these glorious privileges, what manner of persons ought we to be! Let us hearken to the charge further:—

"Preach the Word!" All of the Lord's people are teachers; as it is written, "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the good tidings," etc. This anointing of the spirit which came upon our Lord, the head of the church, comes down to, and covers every member of the body, anointing each one similarly to preach the good tidings, the Word of God's grace and mercy and peace through Jesus—to all who have an ear to hear. The Christian washerwoman is to preach this message; so is the Christian business man and laborer and housewife, each according to his opportunities—and there are surely some opportunities for all. All should be able to show forth the praises of him who hath called us "out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Pet. 2:9);—should be living epistles known and read of all men. We are to consider the preaching of the Word to be the chief business of life, and the earning of a living and keeping ourselves in comfort to be secondary and incidental to the one vocation to which we are called of the Lord. He who would hold back the word of truth must surely do so for a reason, and the reason cannot be a proper one. If he has received the truth in the love of it, he will love to tell it forth; and any restraint will, therefore, indicate either that he is subject to the fear of man or ashamed of the Lord and his Word; and the Master has declared that such are not fit for the kingdom —not fit to be of the Bride class, whatever else they may be fit for.—Luke 9:62.

'Be instant in season and out of season." This cannot mean that we are to violate the laws of reason and decency by intruding the good tidings upon others at times inconvenient and unreasonable to them; but it does mean that we are to have such a love for the truth, such an earnest desire to serve it, that we will gladly accept the opportunity to do so, however inconvenient it may be for ourselves. It is the chief business of our lives, to which life itself even is subservient, and, hence, no opportunity for service must be laid aside.

"Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine." This part of the exhortation is not alike applicable to all; too many feel at liberty to reprove and to rebuke. Doubtless many need reproofs and many need rebukes, but how few are able to administer these to profit and not to injury! The Apostle addressed these words in a particular sense to Timothy as an experienced elder in the church of Christ, and to some extent an overseer amongst the elders. It would be a great mistake to apply these words in general, and for each of the Lord's people to see to what extent he could administer reproofs and rebukes to his brethren. Rather should sympathy go out to such an extent that reproofs and rebukes would be avoided, except as duty, because of responsibility in the church of God, should necessitate this. Even so experienced an elder and overseer as Timothy must see to it that his reproving and rebuking and exhorting should be done with all long-suffering—with patience, gentleness and forbearance, and with doctrine (2 Tim. 4:2); showing clearly wherein the principles of righteousness were infringed and pointing out distinctly the Word of the Lord concerning the same. This duty still rests upon those who occupy places of prominence in the church to which they have in the Lord's providence been appointed; and in proportion as they are filled with the Lord's spirit of love and gentleness and meekness and patience and forbearance, they will strive to perform this delicate and unpleasant business of reproving and rebuking, where necessary, in most modest language and under the most favorable conditions.

Without knowing how long it would be from his day until the harvest, the end of the age, the Apostle did know distinctly from the Scriptures that a great falling away would come and that the end of the age would be a period of special trial amongst the Lord's people, when every man's work would be tested; as he elsewhere wrote, "The fire of that day shall prove every man's work of what sort it is." In verses 3 and 4 of our lesson he describes the conditions which prevail today in the nominal churches. The time has come when sound doctrine is not endured, when the faithful ministers of the Word are considered back numbers, and when up-to-date higher critics are wanted for all the high-salaried pulpits. The Revised Version says, "Having itching ears will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts [desires], and will turn away their ears from the truth and turn aside unto fables." How true to the facts! In scarcely any of the pulpits of Christendom are the truths of God's Word set forth. The great mass of preaching is largely composed of anecdotes or delineations of science, often falsely so called, or essays on politics, social uplift, etc. The preaching of the Lord is obsolete because the hearts of men have been turned largely from the Word of God to the great adversary's deceptions—putting darkness for light and misrepresenting the Bible through the creeds of the various churches.

But what should be the attitude of the true soldier of the Cross at such a time? The faithful ministers of the truth, whether they teach merely by example or precept, or by the printed page or orally,—what should be their attitude? It is clearly pointed out by the Apostle saying, "Watch thou in all things, endure affliction [suffer hardships], do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry"—demonstrate what you have professed and what you know to be the truth, that you are a servant of God and not of man, that you are loyal as an ambassador of the Great King in delivering none other than the message he sends.

As clinching this earnest appeal for faithfulness to the Word of the Lord, the Apostle refers to himself—that he must give up the fight; that the end of his life course was apparently in sight; the time of his departure from life was at hand. How we can rejoice that he could and did write the burning words of verses 7 and 8, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith," etc. As we glance through the Apostle's history we concur with his judgment, and see that he was not boasting; but was a faithful follower in the footsteps of Jesus; that he did make a good fight for right, for principle, for truth, for the Lord against sin and selfishness; that notwithstanding its narrowness and ruggedness, he did run faithfully over the course from the time that he started in it; that he did keep the faith to the close, at the cost of self-denial, of self-sacrifice, hardships and persecutions. And here we must remember that keeping the faith is not merely keeping it in us, but is in the sense of faithfully declaring it; for whoever does not declare the good tidings to others will soon lose the faith himself. Let us press along the line toward the same mark for the same prize of joint-heirship with the Lord; and if when we come to the close of life we can say, as did the Apostle, that we have fought well all along the course and kept the faith, the Lord will not say to us that we did not do as much as the Apostle Paul or as much as the Lord Jesus, but having done what we could, having been faithful in the few things and in the small talents entrusted to us, we will hear the welcome words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

These joys of the Lord the Apostle refers to as a crown of righteousness. The Apostles James and John speak of the same crown and call it the crown of life. (Jas. 1:12; Rev. 2:10), and the Apostle Peter speaking of the same calls it the crown of glory. (1 Pet. 5:4) The thought at the bottom of each of these expressions is evidently the same; namely, the custom in olden times of running races and the giving of a crown to the successful runner at the end of the course. As it was not sufficient to enter a race, or start to run, but it was required that the race be run faithfully and perseveringly to a conclusion, so with this race which we are running as followers of Jesus, it is essential not only that we shall make consecration to the Lord, but that we persevere to the end, and our reward will be the crown of life in the sense that we will get life on the highest plane, inherent life, immortality. It will be a crown of righteousness in the sense that only those who are approved of God as righteous will thus be rewarded and glorified; and our hope is, therefore, that we may be accepted in the Beloved; that the righteousness of the Lord may be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit; and that the rewards which God has promised to those who love him and serve him will be granted to us. The crown of glory is another name for the same grand reward—the glory of the kingdom, the glory of immortality, the glory of the Father's favor, the glory of being joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom.

The Apostle declares that his crown is laid up for him; he did not claim to possess it at the time, except by faith, and he had never seen it except by the eye of faith. This laying up of crowns is an expressive figure. The Scriptural

thought seems to be that when justified believers make a full consecration to the Lord and are accepted as members of the body of Christ, their names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and crowns are set apart for them. If they are faithful their names will never be blotted out and their crowns will never be given to others, but if unfaithful others will be permitted to take their places upon the roll of honor and attain to their inheritance to the crown, their share in the Kingdom.—Rev. 3:11; Rev. 3:5.

The Lord, the righteous Judge, will determine the matter of unworthiness for the crowns. The Apostle's language elsewhere in this letter seems to imply that some who did have confidence in him had lost their confidence, and in the heat of trial had deserted him. "At my first defense no one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their charge." (2 Tim. 4:16) He here intimates that he cannot even accept the judgment of the brethren respecting his faithfulness, but that he has appealed his case in the fullest sense of the word to the great Lord and Judge who shall finally determine these matters for him and for all. He is a righteous Judge and, therefore, will not condemn any who are seeking, to the best of their ability, to serve and praise him. He will approve such, but being a righteous Judge none may venture to hope that he will approve that which is evil, unrighteous, unfaithful; hence, if our hearts condemn us not we may have peace with God.

The Apostle was not expecting his crown of righteousness, the crown of life, the crown of glory, at the moment of death; but pointed Timothy forward to the second coming of Christ, and the general giving of rewards, as the Lord has promised, "at that day." We rejoice to believe that we are living "in that day," and hence that the Apostle is no longer waiting, but has received his crown during this harvest time, and we expect that those who are now alive and remain need not wait, but that when the hour of death shall come to them there will be no need of sleeping to wait for a future time, but the death change will mean the immediate entrance into the glorious conditions referred to by the Apostle.

The Apostle distinctly points out that although he, with the other apostles, occupied a high position in the church of Christ, this did not signify that only the Lord and the apostles were to be crowned as victors; on the contrary, he includes all of the faithful ones of this Gospel age; saying that the crown of righteousness is not for him only, but "for all those who love his appearing." Ah! the loving of his appearing is indeed a close test, whether applied now or in the Apostle's day! The Apostle himself could not have looked forward with joy to the day of Christ's revelation in kingdom power and glory, if he had not felt that he had fought a good fight and kept the faith courageously; and so it must be with all others who have named the name of Christ and started to run in this Gospel race for the heavenly prize. If they are overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches in any sense, they will put far from them the thought of the Lord's presence and kingdom; they will not be looking for it and longing for it; they will not be loving it. Those who love the Lord's appearing must of necessity love the Lord himself, and this will mean that the love of Christ will constrain them to endeavor to serve him and those who are his. John Calvin remarks, "Paul excludes from the number of the faithful those to whom Christ's coming is a source of terror."

PETER AND PAUL.

"In the Vatican library at Rome is preserved a bronze medal with the heads of Peter and Paul, which was found in the cemetery of Domitilla, one of the Flavian family, and if genuine is no doubt the earliest portraiture known of the two great apostles. The medal is referred to the close of the first century or the beginning of the second, and at this early period the features of the two apostles must have been faithfully preserved. Both heads are full of character, and that of Paul in particular is distinguished by solemnity and dignity, and the thoughtful and wrinkled brow indicates the high intellect that so remarkably characterized the man."

QUARTERLY REVIEW

JUNE 28.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom."*—2 Tim. 4:18.

It will, undoubtedly, be advantageous to us to glance back in review over the wonderful experiences covered by the Sunday School lessons of the ending quarter. They extend over a period of about thirty years—from the resurrection of Jesus to the end of Paul's imprisonment in Rome, about A. D. 62. The dominating thought through these lessons is the earnestness of the early church in the service of the Lord, that earnestness being based upon the strong conviction that Christ's death had been the redemption-price for mankind; that the church was now being called out to be members with Christ in his kingdom; that the necessary experiences for participation in the kingdom would be such loyalty to the Lord and to the truth and to the brethren as, under present conditions of sin, would lead to suffering and self-sacrifice on the part of all the faithful; and that the kingdom to be especially for the blessing of all the families of the earth would bring to the faithful suffering ones of this present time, glory, honor and immortality, which would much more than compensate them for every sacrifice, every trial and every sorrow.

Another of the important lessons of this quarter, repeatedly clinched in the various experiences of the Apostle Paul, is expressed clearly in the Golden Text—namely, the Lord's ability to deliver his people from all the machinations of the adversary and his blind emissaries. He who was faithful in the Apostle's case is none the less so today in respect to our affairs. Furthermore, the Golden Text suggests to us the very happifying thought that our Lord is not only able to deliver us from all these human enemies and from the adversary, but that he is able also to preserve us from the last enemy—death. The Apostle at the time of writing these words was in almost hourly expectation of martyrdom—that he would go down into the portals of the tomb—yet he had confidence in the Lord that he would not leave his soul in Hades; he had confidence in our glorious hopes in respect to all the members of the church, expressed in the words, "The gates of hell [*Hades*—the state of death] shall not prevail against it." The grave has prevailed against the church, not only against the great head of the flock, but against all the members of his body, and the adversary has seen to it that many of them came to death ignominously as malefactors, as deceivers, although true. But we have the Lord's assurance for it that this was not the end—that in due time, in the resurrection morning, all who have gone down into death will be delivered; that he, the Son of man, would take unto himself his great power, and open the prison doors and set at liberty the captives of death, his own loved ones being the first to participate in the first resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, and then being used of him as his co-laborers in the great work of delivering all the captives of the tomb, bringing all to the knowledge of the truth, and permitting as many as will to come back to life everlasting, perfection.

In this way the Apostle expected the Lord to preserve him, to keep him unto his heavenly kingdom: he had no thought of death being an utter extinguishment of life; he had full confidence in the resurrection promise, and that the Lord was able to keep that which he had committed unto him against

that day—that glorious Millennial morning—that glorious resurrection morning when the kingdom would be established, and when the blessings of the Lord would be conferred first upon his faithful, as shown in the parables, and that subsequently all the families of the earth should be blessed through that kingdom.—Matt. 25:1-30; Luke 19:11-127.

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CONVENTIONS ACROSS THE SEA

COMPLETION OF THE EDITOR'S TOUR

DEAR WATCH TOWER READERS:—At Edinburgh was our last stop in Scotland, our next convention having been arranged for Liverpool, England. On our arrival we were met by six representatives of the local church, who greeted us warmly in the name of our King, and made us comfortable. After a refreshing sleep we were ready for the convention sessions of Saturday and Sunday (May 16, 17)—five well-attended sessions, beginning with 300 and ending with 600, and averaging 400. Of these, probably 80 were friends from cities we did not have the time to visit—some of them coming considerable distances. Our topics were the same as at other points, except that on Sunday afternoon we had a Question and Answer meeting, lasting from 3 to 5. A free luncheon was served between the afternoon and evening sessions on both days, and was enjoyed by about 150. It is our hope that some good was accomplished by this convention also; that some who came from curiosity were deeply interested; that some already established were encouraged to "press on;" that some partially convinced were helped to full conviction respecting the great divine plan and the grand privilege of participating in it—now, in sufferings and reproaches, and hereafter in glorious services in the kingdom; and that some of those already clear in the truth were encouraged and more firmly established, and incited more than ever to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us [in some, one weakness; and in others, another]," and to "run with patience the race that is set before us in the gospel." If kind words and fervent wishes and earnest hand-shakes speak of love and zeal, then surely we had abundant testimony of the devotion of the Liverpool church. The next morning thirty gathered at the depot, leaving other concerns in order to bid us a final adieu and to urge that we come again before long. Again, as we parted, the song-prayer was lifted heavenward—"God be with you till we meet again!"

Our next appointment was Birmingham, where we arrived about noon, and were met and welcomed at the depot by representatives of the local church. We could stay but the one day here; but had two sessions—3 to 5 and 7 to 9. At the afternoon session we spoke of the oneness of the church, the body of Christ, and the terms of our relationship to our Head; and saw that in no sense are we gathered to men or organizations, but to the Lord himself. "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." About 20 WATCH TOWER readers from outside cities attended. After a free luncheon, in which 55 participated, came the evening session—more particularly for the public—the topic being, "The Oath-bound Covenant." Next morning we bade final farewells and resumed our journey.

Manchester was our next appointment. We reached there by noon and at 2:30 p. m. began another happy convention, in the usual Salford meeting room. The attendance (about 125) represented the deeply interested of that vicinity and of neighboring towns. The closest attention was given us while we endeavored to stir up the pure minds of all, by pointing out the oneness of the church as the members of Christ's body, and that we must all be "beheaded"—must all lose our own headship and self-will, in order that we may be acceptable as *members* of Christ's body, over which he is the only Lord and Head, and his will the only law or control. A free luncheon was then served—participated in most joyously by about 100. Then came our public meeting in the Town Hall, 6:30 to 8:45. Here a very intelligent audience of about 500 gave close attention for nearly three times as long as is their custom. We trust that some received the lesson of "The Oath-bound Covenant" into good and honest hearts, and that thus started, they will begin to read and to study the literature, without which there is little hope for full development under the blessings and privileges of the Lord's people in this "harvest" time.

The next day we had three sessions. At 11 a. m. and 3 p. m. we addressed the church on the necessity for putting on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand in this evil day. We pictured the race-course, called attention to its various degrees of progress in the fulfilling of the law of the new creation—namely, love. Our evening session at 6:30 was again a public one in the "Pendleton Town Hall." Again we had the intelligent audience of the previous night, and again they gave closest attention till 8:40, when we were obliged to close with prayer, without taking time for a closing hymn, and to hasten to our train, connecting with the steamer for Dublin, Ireland. But the audience was loth to leave even then, and, while we put on our wraps to leave, stood singing:

Before the train started, fully sixty of the friends had gathered around our "carriage" door. For the third and fourth (and, by some of them, for the sixth) time our hand was clasped in a fervent good-bye, and the hymn-prayer went up from all our hearts, as with bared heads we unitedly sang:

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love."

Dublin was reached in due course—May 21st. Our first meeting was a public one the same evening, 8 to 9:40, in Rotunda Hall. Our audiences were very attentive, though less enthusiastic than those of England and Scotland—owing, no doubt, to the fact that "present truth" is newer there, has been less studied and is less clearly comprehended. Our first topic was "The Oath-bound Promise," and it is our hope that some of the dear people who listened so intently may be awakened to the necessity of studying the divine plan as set forth in MILLENNIAL DAWN. Some so resolved, and made the start the same evening, as we happen to know.

Friday's meetings were held in the same place, from 4 to 6 and 8 to 10. Some interest was awakened, but how much or how deep, who can say? We are hopeful, however, of the future work here—especially if the city can be systematically colporteured.

We hope that two or three of the brethren will see their privilege and undertake the work. We know of no service open to so many of the Lord's people and offering such abundant return of sheaves, as well as of joy to the reapers.

Saturday morning started us for Belfast, where an evening meeting with an interested group of fifteen was enjoyed. Our hearts burned with love for the Lord and for the brethren, as we called to mind that "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant." (Psa. 25:14) We noted also the words, "None of the wicked shall understand," remarking the impossibility of interesting such in present truth; and that any once sanctified and blest are sure to lose their interest in the deep things of God if they "return to their wallowing in the mire" of sin. We called attention to the fact that murderers and criminals in general profess faith in the eternal torment doctrine, and have mostly been trained to it from infancy, while we who know the Lord, his plan of mercy and love, are constrained, not to license and sin, but, reversely, to copy the divine character.

Sunday's public meetings in Belfast were from 3 to 5 and from 7 to 9:15. The interest, indicated by the close attention given for lengthy sessions, was excellent. Here we parted company with Brothers Hemery (the London representatives, who joined our party at Glasgow) and Henninges, who returned to London via Liverpool, where the latter met Sister H. on her arrival from America. The Editor took ship next morning for Glasgow, bidding good-bye on the wharf to six very earnest brethren, who assured us of their full consecration to the Lord and the truth, and their intention to serve it henceforth with renewed energy. They urged us to return, as the Lord's providence might lead, and wished us to remember them to those of like precious faith in America Our duties required but a brief stay in Glasgow, and we took the night train for London, *en route* for Germany, etc.

At London we parted company with Brother Hemery and were joined by Sister Henninges from the U. S. A. She brought us the kind greetings of the Buffalo and the New York City churches, which were greatly appreciated.

About 65 of the London friends had gathered at the railway station to bid us a final *adieu*—too many to gain admission to the train platform, so we bade them "Good-bye" in the station, where we joined them in the well-known verse:

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above!"

The scene was one long to be remembered, for our hearts felt the meaning of every word we uttered. In answer to

queries we again promised to return whenever the Lord's providences seem so to direct.

A rail journey to the sea, a night on the boat and then seven hours by rail, brought us to Elberfeld, Germany—already decided upon as the most appropriate location for the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society's branch for Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, etc. We made this selection because of the character of the population—religious and independent. Our contact with the people has seemed to confirm this.

Our first attention was given to searching for suitable apartments. We obtained from a renting agency the addresses of eight places, and on going to the first of these we felt that the Lord's providence had directed us to it; and after looking at the others we felt convinced of this and rented it. It has a large room, suitable for meetings, with three smaller rooms connected, suitable for light housekeeping, one of which can be made into one with the large room (by opening four large doors) should this ever become necessary. It would thus accommodate 150 persons. There is also a basement for the storage of tons of tracts, DAWNS, etc. The location is fine—near the postoffice and railway station, and with an electric car service to every part of the city. And, an important item, the rent is cheap.

The next day we met with the dear friends of Barmen-Elberfeld and vicinity. In the afternoon we had a social and question meeting with the deeply interested numbering about 35. In the evening we had a public meeting, attended by about 100, of whom probably one-half were in sympathy with present truth, and the remainder their friends who are inquiring. We spoke on "The Oath-bound Covenant," endeavoring to stimulate the faith of all in that promise, and urging all to lay firm hold of the great promise and to seek earnestly to make their calling and election sure to a membership in the church, the body of Christ—the seed of Abraham that is so soon to engage in the grand work of blessing all the families of the earth, distributing the divine favors legally secured by the sacrifice of God's dear Son, our Lord.

After a night's rest we arose at 5 a. m. and took an early train for Mülhausen (in company with three brethren, also bound for Zürich). We arrived at 5 p. m. and received a hearty greeting at the station. Being thus refreshed in spirit, and subsequently with substantials, we were pleased to address fifty brethren and friends from 8:15 to 10:15—speaking, as at the previous place, on the Oath-bound Promise, which cannot fail, and which means so much to us, the church, and also to the world.

At noon on the next day (May 30) we left for Basle, Switzerland, where during three hours between trains we made the personal acquaintance of the brethren there, and sought to encourage them to run the heavenly race with patience. Our arrival at Zürich was late at night, but a dozen of the brethren awaited us at the depot and gave us hearty greetings, which we as heartily reciprocated. Our stay of two days at Zürich was interesting and, we trust, not without profit. We got personally acquainted with 170, previously known only through correspondence, mostly Swiss, but a goodly number from France and Germany, besides two from Hungary and two from Italy.

Our stop at Thun was only a short one, but gave us the acquaintance of still others of the household of faith. Here we parted company with Brother and Sister Henninges, who returned to Elberfeld and the new work there, while we hastened on—stopping at Neuchatel, Switzerland, between trains. Here the friends, as per previous arrangement, met us at the depot and escorted us to a nearby park, where we had a twenty-five minutes talk, through two interpreters, on the things pertaining to the kingdom. Two of the fourteen present were Germans.

By appointment with Brother Hemery, the Society's British representative, we stopped two days in London—not to meet the church, but to seek a new location for the Society's London office. The matter is not yet settled, but the splendid prospects for the work in Great Britain appeal to us strongly for a more central location than the one which has served us so well for the past three years. We are looking for the leadings of divine providence in this matter and will report on it later.

Our return journey was by the same splendid steamer in which we went away,—the "New York." The Lord furnished an opportunity for the distribution of tracts, and also for a Sunday afternoon service (in the second cabin)—as a result of which we hope for the garnering of at least two grains of "wheat." On board was a polite minister of the Episcopal church, but conversation revealed the fact that, like the one we met when outward bound, he is not a Christian—not a believer in the fall and, consequently, not a believer in the *redemption* from the "curse," or condemnation, of the fall—not a believer in the atonement. The evidences multiply that the falling mentioned by the prophet is well advanced: "A thousand shall fall at thy side." Evidently the leaders of Christian sentiment and ceremony have already fallen from the faith.

We were amazed at the lack of interest in religious themes amongst the passengers. An extensive library on board was well patronized for works of fiction, but no one seemed to care for religious matters—especially amongst the upper class. They have lost their fear of eternal torment, and neither have, nor seek, anything to take its place. The rejection of "hell" means to them a rejection of absolute faith in the Bible as God's inspired Word. (What a great injury that unscriptural theory has worked!) They satisfy the cravings of their minds with morality and forms of godliness. We are glad that it is so, rather than the reverse,—that they should be steeped in immorality and ungodly practices. But how we long for ability to open the eyes of their understanding, that they might rejoice with us in *the divine "plan of the ages"* and in the love toward God which it inspires! Thank God the powers of darkness will soon be scattered by the glories of the Millennial morning, when many of these fine, noble people will see out of obscurity, and rejoice to avail themselves of the restitution privileges then prevailing!

As our vessel reached its dock we were greeted by thirteen of the dear friends of the New York church—first with waving handkerchiefs and hats, and later with fervent hand-clasps. The busiest afternoon of the week was sacrificed to do honor to the cause we represent. The Lord, we are sure, will reward their love. (Heb. 6:10) One dear brother remarked, "Brother Russell, we remembered you in prayer every day; and I believe it was so with the dear friends everywhere. I am confident that no pilgrimage ever made was accompanied by so many prayers." We answered that we had greatly enjoyed and been encouraged by the thought that at least 20,000 of God's people were thus remembering us almost daily.

As we neared Pittsburgh on Sunday morning, two of the brethren boarded our train at an outer station to be first to welcome us home, and later at the depot we were cordially welcomed by a delegation from the Allegheny church. One of these dear brethren had come all the way from Canada to participate in this greeting. We were escorted to the large sitting room of the Bible House (Allegheny). Entering, we found the office-workers gathered—each with a red rose on his bosom, emblematic of Christian love. After greetings, a rose was pinned to our coat lapel, too, and then the entire company joined in a hymn of welcome composed for the occasion, after which one of our number rendered our united acknowledgments and thanks to God.

Notwithstanding the fact that it rained, and that it was generally expected that we would not arrive until Monday, and a reception had been arranged for Monday night, the Bible House Chapel was full (about 300) for our usual Sunday afternoon service. For this occasion, and for the Monday night reception, many of the dear friends had sent in floral offerings, and the Chapel platform was resplendent as never before with roses and lilies and ferns. At first our "bump" of economy was disposed to chide our dear friends for their generosity, and to say, "Wherefore this waste! The money represented in these floflwers might have been better spent in publishing tracts, etc., to assist our poor blinded brethren." But we remembered that it was Judas, and not our Lord, who voiced those sentiments. So we accepted all as done unto him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood (Eph. 4:2), and said not one word to mar the joy of the dear company, who, after our discourse on Isaiah 55:8-11, pressed our hand, assuring us of their joy in welcoming us home. We assured them that, although we had met and become personally interested in many dear brethren and sisters on foreign shores, our heart was proportionately enlarged, so that it meant no diminution of our love for the dear saints in America, and, in an especial sense, the church at Allegheny.

Monday night's reception brought together a splendid company of the Lord's consecrated children—adorned with the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit, "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great value." (1 Pet. 3:4) Quite a number came from surrounding cities and towns—and more flowers came, too; "alabaster boxes" of sweet odor to the Lord, because really rendered unto him, and to us merely because he had been pleased to use us as his mouthpiece in proclaiming his great plan of the ages in this hie due time for revealing it. It is not possible to describe the pleasures of our fellowship in Christ that evening, and we will not try. But it is safe to say that with all the secret of joy was in the Lord's great plan and in what we can see of its prosperity.

Faithfully, your brother and servant in the Lord,

CHARLES T. RUSSELL.

"GROW IN GRACE"

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen."—2 Pet. 3:17, 18.

There is a touching tenderness in the epistles of the aged Apostle Peter to the household of faith, showing that, while he realized that the time of his departure was drawing nigh (2 Pet. 1:14; John 21:18, 19), his solicitude for the growth and development of the church was increasing. Accordingly, he writes two general epistles, not so much to advance new truth, as to call to remembrance truths already learned and fully received (2 Pet. 1:12-15), and to counsel all to faithfulness and to growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In the preceding verses he has been calling to mind some of these truths, and he recognizes the fact that those addressed are already established in them; but, in view of his knowledge that false teachers would arise to pervert the truth, he counsels special watchfulness against being led away from their present steadfastness by the error of the wicked. That this counsel of the Apostle has a special fitness to the church in the last days, our days, and was evidently so designed by the spirit of God, is clear from verse 3—"There shall come in the last days scoffers," etc.

Let us observe the manner in which the Apostle would have us guard against being led away by the error of the wicked. Is it by a careful investigation of all the claims which every new false prophet that arises may intrude upon our attention, thus giving heed to every seducing spirit (1 Tim. 4:1)? No: that would be quite contrary to the teaching of "our beloved brother Paul," to whom Peter so affectionately refers, and whom he so fully endorses; for Paul had given no uncertain counsel on this subject; saying, "Shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker;" and "I entreat you, brethren, to mark those who are making factions and laying snares contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them; for they that are such are not in subjection to our anointed Lord, but to their own appetite [for honor and praise among men, as great teachers—1 Tim. 1:6, 7]; and by kind and complimentary words they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. . . . . I wish you to be wise with respect to that which is good, and harmless with respect to that which is evil."—2 Tim. 2:16, 17; Rom. 16:17-19.

Peter felt the force of Paul's wise and earnest counsel, and with emphasis re-echoed the same sentiments. To give heed to such seducing doctrines, contrary to the doctrine which we have already received from the Lord and the apostles, argues a lack of faith in those doctrines. Such a one is not *established* in the faith. And indeed there are those—and such is the general sentiment among the teachers of false doctrine—who think that it is not either necessary or advisable to be established in the faith. To be established is to be a bigot, is the idea they advance. And so it is, if one is so unfair in mind as to accept and tenaciously hold that which he has never proved either by sound logic or Bible authority. But he is not an unreasoning bigot who, in simple faith, on the authority of God, accepts the Word of God. And such, and only such, as do so are established in the truth. The difference between the strong and steadfast Christian and a bigot is that the one is established in the truth, while the other is established in error. The former knows the truth, and the truth has made him free from all doubts and misgivings, and from all desire to delve into the muddy pool of human speculations. To all such Paul says, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught [by us, the apostles], abounding therein with thanksgiving."—But, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." —Col. 2:6-8.

With these sentiments of "our beloved brother Paul," Peter's counsel is in fullest harmony, his advice being, not to waste valuable time in investigating "the errors of the wicked;" but, on the contrary, to endeavor the more earnestly to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ," who is the way, the truth and the life. The more thorough our knowledge of the Lord and the more intimate our acquaintance with him, the more secure we are in our own steadfastness.

But what is it to grow in grace? It is to grow in favor with the Lord through an intimate personal acquaintance and fellowship of spirit with him. It implies, first, a knowledge and recognition on our part of our redemption through his precious blood and a personal faith in and dependence upon all the promises of the Father made to us through him, and then an intimate communion with him in our daily life of prayer, and of observation of his will and obedience to it. If such be our constant attitude of mind and heart, there must be a constant ripening of the fruits of the spirit, rendering us more and more pleasing and acceptable to our Lord. A sense of the divine acceptance and favor is given to us from day to day in increasing measure, in fulfilment of that blessed promise of our Lord, "If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."—John 14:23.

This, as nearly as words can express it, is what it is to grow in grace; but the full and blessed understanding of it is best appreciated by those who from day to day walk with God in faith and obedience and love.

To grow thus in grace and not grow in knowledge is impossible; for the very object of such communion is to build us up in a more perfect knowledge and acquaintance with the Lord—to bring us into closer fellowship with the divine plan, and to give us the privilege of being "workers together with him" in executing that plan. If, therefore, we love and obey the Lord and desire to grow in his favor, his written Word is our daily meditation and study; and thus we grow in knowledge: not, however, by finding out each year that what we learned last year was false, but by adding to what we learned last year, by putting on more and more of the armor of God until we realize its glorious completeness in the full discernment of the divine plan of the ages. We are then ready to do valiant service for the cause of truth in withstanding the encroachment of error (Eph. 6:10-13), being established, strengthened and settled in the faith (1 Pet. 5:10) But even to those thus established in the faith there is abundant opportunity to grow in knowledge; for while they will see nothing new or different in outline or design, they will be continually charmed and cheered with newly discovered lines of harmony and beauty in the divine drawings of the wonderful plan of the ages. As pupils we may ever study the master workmanship of the divine Architect.

Our beloved brother Peter, zealous for our growth in knowledge, endeavors to inspire us thereto, by calling our attention to the wonderful events and the close proximity of the day of the Lord; saying,—

"The day of the Lord will come as a thief [unobserved by the world], in the which the heavens [present ecclesiastical powers] shall pass away with a great noise [tumult and confusion], and the elements [the various parties and sects composing it, split and torn by discordant views] shall melt with fervent heat [the heat of public discussion and investigation]: the earth also [society as at present organized under civil and ecclesiastical authority] and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (destroyed) in the strife and friction caused by increasing knowledge combined with selfishness. This will not be a literal fire, but, as described by the prophets, the fire of divine jealousy—(Zeph. 1:18; 3:8; 2 Pet. 3:10). Already the noise and tumult, which shall thus eventuate in world-wide anarchy, are distinctly heard in every nation; for the day of the Lord has indeed begun, and the heat of human passion is growing more and more intense daily, and the great time of trouble is very near.

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved [seeing that present arrangements and institutions shall all go down], what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens [the present ruling powers] shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" Let us indeed lay to heart this solemn question, for we stand in the very presence of the Judge of all the earth. These words, while addressed to God's people eighteen centuries ago, and serving a purpose for good all along down this Gospel age, are specially meant by the spirit for us, who are living in this very day of God.

"Nevertheless, we [we who have come into covenant relationship with the Lord—we, unlike the rest of the world, know

of the divine plan and], according to his promise, look for new heavens [the kingdom of God—to be established in power and great glory] and a new earth [a new organization of society under the rulership of Christ and his glorified bride, the church] wherein dwelleth righteousness." Blessed assurance! how favored are we above the people of the world who have not this knowledge!

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be *diligent* that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." (2 Pet. 3:11-14) And Jude (24) reminds us that the Lord, in whose grace and knowledge Peter desires us to grow, "is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Amen.

UNFAVORABLE ANSWERS TO PRAYER

1 SAM. 8:1-10.—JULY 5.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"*Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only.*"—1 Sam. 7:3.

The International Lesson course now turns again to the Old Testament. Six months ago we considered the child Samuel, his parentage, training, acceptance with God, etc. The present lesson takes up the thread of history in Samuel's old age. There is not a suggestion anywhere of disloyalty to the Lord or to the people of Israel on the part of this great prophet Samuel; the Lord's love and favor continued with him to the very close of his life and made it useful to the very end. As he advanced in years, and as the nation of Israel advanced in numbers, it seemed a proper thing that, in addition to the court of justice presided over by the prophet, there should be another court, especially on the southern boundary of Palestine, at Beersheba; and having sons, it was but natural that the prophet should expect of them considerable ability, discretion, wisdom and integrity in serving the Lord and his people according to the example which he had set them. Where could he expect to find more competent assistant judges for service in Beersheba than his own sons?

We perceive that integrity of character, although transmissible to a certain degree, cannot be fully relied upon in the children, however noble and God-fearing the parent. The heart, the will, of each individual, is independent; training may indicate to it the proper course, but full consecration to the Lord is essential to the full, ripe development of character. Samuel's integrity is shown by the fact that when it was proven to him that his sons were guilty of accepting bribes to pervert justice, he promptly removed them from their positions of influence. Doubtless he had in mind the course of his predecessor, Eli, who was too lax in his dealings with his own sons, and thus permitted great calamities to come upon them and upon the people. The nobility and integrity of Samuel's course, which so commends itself to all lovers of righteousness, was no doubt to some extent guided by the lessons of the Lord exemplified in Eli's case. Certain it is that Samuel continued in the divine favor to the end of his course.

As we have already seen, there were elders, or judges, in all the tribes, whose business it was to conduct and adjudicate the smaller matters of the people of their own tribe. It was probable, therefore, that only the larger questions were brought before Samuel and his sons, who constituted, we might say, a kind of superior court—Samuel, as a prophet and judge of divine appointment, representing the Lord. The government of Israel was different from that of every other government in the world. God was their real King, and in his providences, according to the covenant he had made with them, he supervised their affairs—whether by permitting them to go into temporary captivity to their enemies, because of sins and unfaithfulness to him, or by prospering the nation and delivering them and guiding their efforts favorably when living in obedience to him. Under the judgeship of Samuel they had no king, no emperor, no one except the Lord, to hold an autocratic position, and whose word would be law—the judges raised up for them from time to time being providentially guided by the Lord. The government was not a republic in the present day understanding of that term. The people did not choose their own head, or president, or judge; they merely looked for the leadings of divine providence and accepted such judges as the Lord raised up for them. Their condition was a most happy one in many respects: how much better to have the Lord's providential guidance in all our affairs than to trust in our own wisdom or in the wisdom of some other man or some royal family!

As the Elders of Israel perceived that the sons of Samuel were not to be relied upon to follow in the steps of their father, and to be faithful and impartial judges, seeking to know and to judge amongst the people according to the divine will, they became fearful; they forgot—or perhaps never fully recognized—that God was their real Judge, their King, and that Samuel was only his representative and mouthpiece. They forgot that although Samuel was growing old, the Lord was "the same yesterday, today and forever," unchangeable, and able to raise up for them, in his own due time, a judge of the kind best suited to their necessities. The anxious Elders of Israel consulted together and concluded that they would feel better satisfied if they were permanently tied up to some autocratic ruler—if they became the servants of some one of their number, and permitted his family in a line of succession to be their masters, their kings. Doubtless, too, they did not realize that, personally and nationally, they were on a higher plane than the nations around them that had kings; they felt, on the contrary, that they were "out of style;" and, as people are very apt to do, they concluded that the majority must be right, and probably felt somewhat ashamed to speak of their tribes as a nation without a king, without a master, without a visible lord, claiming allegiance merely to the invisible Jehovah. Kitto tells us of a somewhat similar sentiment springing up amongst the Dutch when the latter had a republican form of government:

"When the English and Dutch were plotting for power and influence in the East, the English, in order to damage their rivals, industriously circulated the dangerous secret that the Dutch had no king. The oriental mind was puzzled and perplexed by the indication of a condition so utterly beyond the scope of its experience and comprehension. The Dutch, alarmed for the effect of this slur upon their respectability, stoutly repelled the charge as an infamous calumny,—affirming that they had a very great king, and exalted, for the nonce, their Stadt to the higher rank."

Influenced by this servility to custom, the Elders of Israel brought their petition, or prayer, to Samuel that he, as God's representative, would anoint for them a king—a special ruler over them, and make them as a whole a nation of servants to one of their own nation. It is hard for us to sympathize with such ignoble sentiments, such prayers for their own degradation. Samuel seems to have viewed the matter from this standpoint, and perhaps also regarded it as a personal slight to himself. However, he very properly took the matter to the Lord in prayer. It was not for him to decide what and how—he was merely the Lord's mouthpiece and representative to speak to the Israelites in the name of the Lord whatever message he should receive. Ah, how grand it would be if the whole world could be under such a rule,—heavenly wisdom directing, and incorruptible earthly judges communicating and enforcing the divine message and law! And this, the Scriptures inform us, is what will come to pass eventually, the Lord's declaration being, "I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counselors as at the beginning." (Isa. 1:26) However, before that grand condition—of which the Jewish law-givers and judges were merely the crudest types—can be realized, it will be necessary for the great King Immanuel to take his great power and reign and subdue all things unto himself. Then, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power"—they will be ready to hearken to the voice of the Lord through those whom he will eventually appoint and recognize as his mouthpieces.

The Lord's answer to Samuel was that the prayer or petition of the people through their elders would be granted; but directed that he should, nevertheless, explain to them what this answer to their prayers, this fulfilment of their desires, would mean—that it would mean the surrender of their liberties and rights; that the rule of a king would be more or less despotic, tyrannical and selfish; that their sons and daughters would be taken to be servants in various capacities; that a large portion of their substance would be taken as taxes for the support of royalty, and that they would be subject to the whims of these masters whom they were desiring, whose pride and ambition would some time lead to rivalries and warfare, in which the whole people, as their servants, would suffer with them.

The elders heard all this delineation of the unwisdom of their course, but were, nevertheless, well satisfied to make the experiment—they wanted to be like the nations around them. How strong is the influence of imitation in all mankind! how necessary that all should have before their minds true standards, true ideals of greatness of liberty or of righteousness,—

of that which is really advantageous! Herein the Lord's people have his wisdom, his spirit—have a standpoint of observation superior to that of others, and possess the spirit of a sound mind proportionate to their education in the school of Christ. He has an education in the school of the Lord which gives him a finer acumen in respect to all the things of this present time, which seem comparatively insignificant to him in comparison with the things of the future—the eternal things. As the Apostle says, "He that is spiritual judgeth [understandeth] all things, yet he himself is judged [understood] of no man."—1 Cor. 2:15.

The Lord pointed out that the people were not rejecting Samuel, but were rejecting him. Indeed, that they had not rejected Samuel was evident from the fact that they come to him with the request. It was their lack of faith in the Lord that led them to fear what would happen after Samuel should die, or when his usefulness should become impaired through old age. The Lord points out that this had been the attitude of Israel from the first—"all the works that they have done since I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherein they have forsaken me and served other gods,—so do they also unto thee." They, of course, forsook Samuel as their judge; for the king whom he would anoint would be the judge instead. But the discredit to Samuel was nothing in comparison to their discrediting and rejecting the One whom he represented.

The Lord's people of today may draw from these incidents a valuable lesson in connection with the divine supervision of spiritual Israel. The Lord organized the church very much along the same lines as he organized natural Israel. He is the head of the church—the guide and director and instructor of the church. He guarantees that all things shall work together for good to those who love him and follow his guidance. For a time the Lord's people were content with such leadership as he raised up for them in his own way, content that the Lord should direct through the leaders of Zion and that no man should be called lord, or master, or king. For a time spiritual Israel looked only for such instructors, lawgivers, judges, teachers and assistants in the spiritual way as the Lord in his providences raised up for them. But, by and by, there came a time when they said, Let us make us a king—let us have a head in the Christian church such as there is in all the heathen religions around us. The Lord had already pointed out to his people a great Leader by whom he had made them free; that they all were brethren, and that only one as Lord and Master; that they should recognize no man as lord, and should recognize each other only as servants; and that the one who served most thoroughly—through the Lord's supervision—was to be esteemed as raised up and provided by divine providence for the service, and to be esteemed in proportion to his humility and loyalty to the Lord and his Word.

The spirit of subserviency and the desire to have a head, led, first, to a division amongst the Lord's people into two classes called clergy and laity, a division not recognized nor sanctioned in the Word of the Lord; and, secondly, amongst the clergy it led to the exaltation of some, called archbishops, to the position of lordship over districts; and, thirdly, it led to the choice amongst the archbishops of one to be a chief, or pope; and ultimately it led to this chief being considered infallible and a divinely appointed king over spiritual Israel. As there were some better and some worse amongst the kings of natural Israel, so there were some better and some worse amongst the popes who ruled in spiritual Israel for centuries. Finally, as there was a split in the kingdom of Israel between the ten tribes and the two tribes, so there came in time a split in spiritual Israel nominal, and Protestantism arose, no longer recognizing the popes as kings in spiritual Israel. However, the spirit of subserviency being still present, and the spirit of liberty wherewith Christ had made his people free being still lacking, the Reformation movement led to the appointment and recognition of numerous petty kingdoms in spiritual Israel—the Lutheran house and the Episcopal house and the Presbyterian house and the Methodist house, etc., etc., with their various ecclesiastical princes and potentates, doctors of divinity, etc.—lording it over God's heritage.—1 Pet. 5:3.

It is time for the establishment of the true kingdom—it is just at hand. It is time for the gathering of the elect out of every quarter, every district of this figurative Babylon in which the Lord's people are captives to these devices of Satan; it is time for a reassertion of the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free; it is time that the Lord's people should recognize him as their only King and Director; it is time for them to hear the words, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isa. 2:22); it is time for the Lord's people to realize that the Lord is entirely competent to conduct his own work in the way most pleasing to himself, and most advantageous to those who are truly his; it is time for them to look to the Lord to see what agents, what channels of truth, what ministries of service in spiritual Israel he has provided or is providing. When we come to realize the situation, we find that all this matter of recognizing popes, cardinals, bishops, doctors of divinity, etc., is contrary to the divine arrangement—in direct antagonism to the same; but that, nevertheless, it has not hindered, and will not be permitted to hinder, the accomplishment of the Lord's work and the gathering of the true Israelites, the elect, the precious, the Lord's jewels, out of nominal Israel. This work of the Lord is going gradually on, regardless of what the people in general may do.

We have considered this lesson under the head of "Unfavorable Answers to Prayer," because it furnishes an excellent illustration along this line. What might have been the condition of Israel had they not prayed for a king, we cannot know particularly: but we can know, on the strength of the Lord's Word, that it would have been more favorable to them if they had been in a condition of heart which would have led them to thank God for his care, and to rejoice in him as their King, and to have made no such petition for an earthly monarch as is here recorded. The Lord through the Prophet Hosea (13:9-11) intimates that the answer of this prayer for a king was disadvantageous to the nation; saying, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself: but in me is thine help. I will be thy king: where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes? I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath." The king whom the Lord intends to give to Israel and to the world is Messiah. In due time the Lord will set his king upon his holy hill Zion; the law shall go forth from Mount Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; in his day the righteous shall flourish and evil doers shall be cut off. The Lord took away the kings of Israel when the people went into captivity to Babylon; there have been no independent kings of their nation since. Today, after centuries of experience without a king of their own, and under various kings of various nations, they are probably in a better condition of heart than ever before to receive the great blessing which God intends to bring to them first amongst the nations of the world. The prophet declares of them respecting Messiah's kingdom, that they shall be ready to hail it and shall say, "This is our God, we have waited for him and he will save us." They certainly had serious experiences, not only under their own kings, but under all the kings of the earth; they certainly should be glad that the time shall again come when the Lord will be king over them—and over all the earth; when he shall restore to them a system of lawgivers and judges, and bless all the families of the earth through the seed of Abraham,—Messiah and his bride, the overcomers of spiritual Israel.—Gal. 3:16, 29.

What we thus see exemplified on a large and national scale we may see exemplified in a small way closer to us. How many of us in our ignorance and blindness have at some time in life prayed for the various systems of bondage, for the various sects of Christendom, and labored, too, for their upbuilding, only to find ourselves injured spiritually by that which we prayed for and labored for. We asked amiss, as did the Elders of Israel, while, instead, our hearts as well as theirs should have inquired continually for the ways of the Lord, for his leadings, not asking to have him favor and bless that which we ignorantly and mistakenly supposed to be for his glory and our own good. Let us learn to pray aright, as well as to labor and to hope aright; and in order so to do let us be swift to hear, slow to speak, swift to hearken to the Word of the Lord and to the lesson which he has already given us, and to his method of instructing us and guiding us and blessing us. Let us be slow to tell him what our preferences are; indeed, let us seek to attain that development of Christian character which will permit us always not to seek our own wills, but the will and way of our Father in heaven.

The same principle will apply in the more private affairs of our daily lives. Several parents have told us, with aching hearts, of prayers answered which subsequently they could have wished never answered; they have told us of companions and children on their deathbeds for whose lives they had prayed with importunity and without either the words or the sentiment, Thy will be done, and how the Lord answered those prayers, and what terrible evils had come to them through the answers. All cases may not be alike, but the properly exercised and heart-developed children of God should expect to attain to the place where all of their prayers are answered, and answered in the best possible way, and most satisfactorily, because the Lord's Word dwells in them richly. They would not ask amiss—would not ask anything contrary to the divine will and providences; but rather, trusting to the divine wisdom, their prayer would be, "Lord, thy will, not mine, be done."

CHOOSING A KING

1 SAM. 10:17-27.—JULY 12.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"The Lord is our king; he will save us."*—Isa. 33:22.

Although the people of Israel were self-willed in the matter of desiring a king like the nations about them, it is to their credit that they desired the Lord, through his prophet Samuel, to make the selection of the one who should fill the office. Undoubtedly, however, men of the various tribes were ambitious for the office. To suppose otherwise would be to disregard our knowledge of and experience with human nature. If the petty offices of ward and town politics are eagerly sought and almost fought for at the primaries and polls today, what wire pulling might we not expect if it were determined that a king should be chosen? We fear that a contrast between the people of Christendom and the Israelites on this subject would result unfavorably to the former. In all the countries constituting "Christendom" how few there are who, when choosing their officers, give any consideration whatever to the Lord's choice for the position! Even when we think of the choice of ministers in the denominations of the church nominal, we find the contrast rather unfavorable; for the choice of a bishop or minister is indeed, apparently, very rarely referred to the Lord exclusively, with the desire to have his will and his choice, and none other, selected.

Guided by the Lord, Saul, a young man from an influential family, of the tribe of Benjamin, was anointed to be king. He was brought to the prophet for the anointing by a peculiar train of circumstances. His father owned a valuable herd of asses which strayed away, and Saul, after seeking them in vain, appealed to the prophet for assistance in locating them, and thus he showed his confidence in God, and in Samuel as his prophet. Nothing is recorded respecting the young man's interest in religious matters up to this time; but he is mentioned favorably as a "goodly" young man. After his anointing he kept the matter secret with becoming modesty, waiting for the Lord's plan to develop more fully and to bring him ultimately into prominence before the nation. It is quite probable that this secretiveness was at the instigation of Samuel.

In due time Samuel sent word to the Elders of Israel to meet him at Mizpeh (watch-tower), and upon their arrival the matters of this lesson followed. Samuel rehearsed to them the Lord's favor as it had been with them during the previous centuries, beginning with their miraculous deliverance from Egypt. He impressed upon them the fact that all of the Lord's care over them had been for their good; that no king could have done them better service than their great King; and that no government could have been more to their happiness than that they had enjoyed and which they were now rejecting in their request for a king, which petition the Lord had determined to grant. In harmony with this they had assembled—not all the people, but representatives from all the tribes and from the various families of each tribe. Ignoring the anointing of Saul already accomplished, Samuel proceeded to cast lots, that the people might thus know that the choice to be made was the Lord's choice and not Samuel's. It was the custom at that time to have the high priest's ephod in use on such occasions, and a pocket in the ephod was made the receptacle for slips of paper, or sometimes for the precious stones representing the different tribes and families. First, a choice was made amongst the tribes to determine in which one would be found the man whom the Lord had chosen to become their king. Doubtless the princes of the tribe of Ephraim remembered the good promises prophetically given by Jacob respecting them, and probably thought that the Lord's choice would fall upon their tribe. The princes of Manasseh may also have remembered the good promises respecting their tribe, and may not have been without hope respecting the lot. The men of Judah, unquestionably, would call to mind the promise that a lawgiver should come from Judah, and would have strong hopes respecting the result of the lot. But when the lot was cast, when the hand pulled forth from the ephod pocket the stone representing the tribe of Benjamin, the matter was decided, and in general the people bowed to the Lord's decision. Next, the leading families, or clans, of the tribe of Benjamin were representatively placed in the ephod, and the hand drew forth as the Lord's choice the name representing the family of Matri; and again, the various members of the family of Matri were representatively placed in the ephod bag, and the hand drew forth the name of Saul, the son of Kish. Thus was publicly demonstrated the Lord's choice, which the prophet and Saul himself already knew. We can imagine the stir and commotion to find the man thus chosen to be the king, respecting whom but few of the people seemed to have the slightest knowledge. They sought him everywhere, but could not find him, and again the inspired oracle was sought to indicate whether he would be found, and where. The Lord's answer was that he had hidden himself amongst the stuff—the baggage which, as was the custom, was probably piled up, surrounding the camp as a barricade. Saul evidently had full confidence in the Lord's foreknowledge and that the lots drawn would confirm the prophet's declaration to him and his anointing. The modesty which led him to hide and, to some extent, to shrink from the honor to be conferred, is very gratifying to all right-minded people. Would that we could see more of this modesty amongst the chief ones of this world and also amongst the chief ones of nominal spiritual Israel! We should each mark the beauty of such humble-mindedness, and seek to cultivate the same quality in our own hearts and lives—however different this may make us from the majority of the world.

When Saul stood amongst the people he was head and shoulders above them, probably seven feet tall. His natural qualities would thus appeal strongly to the people of his time, who even in picturing their rulers represented them as many times larger than the average man. Then Samuel introduced him, saying, "See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people?" and the responsive shout of the people was, "God save the king!" or literally, Lord, let the king live—the usual greeting to their kings.

We are reminded of the fact that God is now about to establish a kingdom in the world and is choosing a king. The Millennial kingdom might not be necessary in the form in which it will be introduced, were the people in the right attitude of heart to desire and to obey the divine will; but they prefer to have the laws of righteousness *enforced* rather than voluntarily to submit themselves to the Lord. In due time they shall have a king, Immanuel—like Saul in some respects, but very unlike him in others. The Lord is now selecting this King Immanuel. He is passing by the great tribes, the prominent people, and choosing the little and the humble—not many great, not many wise, not many learned has God chosen, but the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the kingdom. (1 Cor. 1:26-28) The selection is going on in the sight of all the people. They will be witnesses, when all the steps of the election of God have been taken, that the choice is the Lord's without peradventure; and yet the Lord foreknew his choice in advance of this public selection. He foreknew Jesus as the head of the church, the head of the great king; he anointed him in advance "with the oil of gladness above his fellows," to be king; yet, so far as the people in general are concerned, they know not the Lord's anointed—the matter is kept secret for a time. The members of the body of Christ must all be like the head. As the Apostle declares, God has predestinated that every one who shall become a member of that body shall be "conformed to the image of his Son." (Rom. 8:29) By and by, when the outward election is complete, when the world shall come properly to feel its need for a great king, search will be made to find the Lord's Anointed, and he will be found at his second advent. "The desire of all nations shall come"; the Christ of God will be the desired one of all nations. (The name Saul, singularly enough, signifies Desired.) As the men of Israel gave a shout when they recognized Saul's stateliness, so the world of mankind will shout for joy when they shall realize the presence of the Christ of God, the great King, their deliverer from Satan, from misrule, from every enemy—the Lord who "must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet—the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Not only shall it be true that the Lord's Anointed One shall be head and shoulders above all others, "the chiefest amongst ten thousand, the one altogether lovely," but it should also be true to a considerable extent that all those who are intimately associated with the members of the body of Christ in the present life—before he is proclaimed king of the whole world—should be able to recognize the largeness and grandeur of character in those whom the Lord is choosing for this place of honor in the affairs of men. They should be able to take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus, should see their largeness of heart, their moral heights—should discern in them the spirit of a sound mind.

The record is that a band of Israelites, a body-guard, at once attached themselves to Saul—men "whose hearts God had touched." They were touched with the realization that the Lord had made this choice, and with the desire to be in accord with the Lord and to support the divine will as it concerned the chosen one, and to cooperate therewith. This is a proper lesson to all of the Lord's people now. It is because we see Jesus to be the Father's choice that we unite ourselves to him; because we see the Father's character manifested in him that we leave all to follow him. Similarly, if we lend our aid, our support to any human being in connection with the divine plan

and service, it should be simply upon this ground—not merely a personal magnetism or favoritism, but because our hearts are touched by the Lord with a realization of the leader being of his appointment. Nevertheless, we shall find ourselves colaboring in a manner most useful and most helpful in the Lord's service; coworkers with God and coworkers with all who are his servants under his appointments. So, doubtless, it will be in the future when the great king complete has taken the reins of government; the best of mankind will flock to him, anxious to know and to do his will and to be in full accord with him as the representative of the heavenly Father and his kingdom.

The expression "Sons of Belial" signifies children of the devil, or wicked persons—persons out of harmony with God and not submissive to his arrangements and selections. There are also such in the present time, who are speaking evil directly or indirectly of such members of the body of Christ as they have contact with; being out of sympathy with the Lord they are out of sympathy with all of his arrangements. Their influence either in the nominal church or out of it is, therefore, against the true interests of the Lord's cause. There will be such in the Millennial age when the kingdom shall have been established, and of these the Lord speaks in the parable, "Those who would not have me to reign over them." Again they are mentioned by the Apostle (Acts 3:23) saying, "It shall come to pass that the soul who will not obey that prophet shall be cut off from amongst the people." However, we may be sure that they will not be cut off until they have had a full exhibition of the divine power and mercy;—only such as resist after all these opportunities and privileges will be counted worthy of the second death.

Very shortly after Saul's appointment to the kingdom he had opportunity to show his ability in delivering the people, for a neighboring king advanced upon Israel with a considerable army. Saul gathered his troops from the various tribes, to the number of 330,000 men, and totally routed Nahash and his army of the Ammonites. This victory cemented the hearts of the people of Israel to their king, and they in their loyalty demanded the execution of the sons of Belial who had spoken against him; but the nobility of King Saul is shown in his refusal to accede to this suggestion, and his saying, "There shall not a man be put to death today." So when the power of the glorious king of the Millennial age shall be manifested in the routing of the enemies of righteousness, the general sentiment of the world toward him will be loyalty, and then he will have an opportunity of showing his mercy and forbearance toward those who during the darkness of the present time have spoken evil of him and sought to oppose his kingdom. The declaration shall then go forth that none shall die the second death on account of Adamic weaknesses, blindness and insubordination;—that none shall die the second death except as the result of personal and wilful sin after having been brought to a knowledge of the truth.

Our Golden Text is one the sentiments of which should be deeply impressed upon the hearts of all the Lord's people. The world may cry out, saying, "We have no king but Cæsar," but the Lord's people, the Israelites indeed, will feel the reverse of this,—that "the Lord is our king." In harmony with his command, we will honor earthly kings and obey earthly laws in every particular in which they do not conflict with the divine law; but, nevertheless, above earthly kings, our esteem, homage and obedience must be to him whom the Lord hath appointed, King Immanuel. If he be enthroned in our hearts it will be comparatively easy for us to be loyal to him in our conduct and in our words, wherever we may be. If we deny him, he will also deny us; but if we confess him he will also confess us before the Father and the holy angels—he will save *us* ultimately through *us* as his church, his body, he will, according to the original promise, bless all the families of the earth which we, with him, will then inherit.—Gal. 3:29.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

GOD'S PROVIDENCE OVER THE WORLD

Question.—I have recently lost a friend by death, and notice that your teaching seems to be that the Lord's providential care is over the consecrated ones. Am I to get the thought that God had no providential care over the interests of my friend?

Answer.—"His tender mercies are over all his works." (Psa. 145:9) Hence, in a certain sense, God's providential care attaches to every creature.

"The whole creation is his charge,
But saints are his peculiar care."

When thinking of your friend, consider him as one of the many children of Adam whom God so loved as to give for them his only begotten Son. The redemption price has been paid by our Lord, and the time of deliverance draws near. When it shall have arrived, all the families of the earth will receive a blessing at the hands of him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. Viewing the matter from this standpoint, there is no human creature that is not a subject of divine providence and care. In speaking of God's providences being over only the consecrated, we referred to his *special* providences of this Gospel age in respect to the calling and election of the church, the body of Christ. Divine providence deals with this class alone in this Gospel age, favoring them by the call and by the adversities which will polish and fit them as jewels for the kingdom. For these, all things shall work together for good, because they love God in an especial sense—better than they love self or family or houses or lands —yea, better than their own lives.

WHO ARE OUR BRETHREN?

Question.—What should be our attitude toward professing Christians of the various denominations who give evidence of but slight knowledge of the truth, and but slight appreciation of the ransom? Should we consider them brethren in Christ? and should we fellowship them as such? or should we treat them as heathen men and publicans?

Answer.—All who profess love to the Lord Jesus Christ and have faith in him as their Savior—even though their knowledge of his redemptive work be but limited and vague—and whose general conduct is noted as indicating their desire to walk after the spirit and not after the flesh, should be considered and treated as brethren. But when we use the word "brother" we are to remember that amongst believers there are two classes of brethren: (1) Those who have merely pledged themselves to the Lord for a reformation of life, and who are to some extent trusting in the Savior; and (2) those who have gone on and who have consecrated their lives even unto death, and have been begotten as new creatures by the holy spirit. These are brethren of a different order; the first were typified in the Levites, the last in the priests. Both are our brethren, and both should be treated courteously, kindly, helpfully; but it would be impossible to fellowship the first class in the same manner or degree that we would fellowship the second class. In considering the church, only the latter should be counted, because the church is the body of Christ, the Royal Priesthood. Only the latter, therefore, should be expected to participate in the Memorials of the Lord's death, and the pledge of consecration to be dead with him. It is to the first of these classes of brethren (typified by the Levites) that the Apostle addressed the exhortation, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices," etc. (Rom. 12:1) Those who follow this exhortation and make the sacrificial consecration, thereby become brethren on the highest plane of the spirit, and thus become members of the highest degree of fellowship as members of the body of the anointed one.

Knowledge is to be highly esteemed in the church, and to be regarded as an evidence of progress, of growth; for none can grow strong in the Lord and in the power of his might—in grace—unless he grows also in knowledge. We properly esteem most highly those whose love for the Lord and for his truth are evidenced by zeal in the study of his Word, and whose favor with God is evidenced by their being guided more and more into the deep things of God. Nevertheless, as in the earthly family we love and care for the babes and immature, so also in the household of faith the little ones and the dwarfs are to be cared for and loved and helped that they may grow strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

VARYING DEGREES OF UNBELIEF

The "higher critics" differ considerably. It would be amusing, were it not so serious a subject, to note how the one class upbraids the other for "destructive criticism of the Word of God," and then in the same article proceeds along the same lines,—only a little less destructive of the faith For instance, note the following from the *Presbyterian Standard*:—

"On Sunday last Dr. Josiah Penniman, dean of the University of Pennsylvania, delivered an exceedingly interesting address or lay sermon from the pulpit of the Asheville Presbyterian church at the morning hour, in which he told of the remarkable revelations made by pick and shovel in excavating the site of the ancient city of Chalneh in the valley of the Euphrates. This city is mentioned in Gen. 10:10, and the work of digging it out has been done by the University of Pennsylvania during the last thirteen years. The destructive critics say that the art of writing was not known at the time of Abraham. But the University of Pennsylvania has exhumed more than forty thousand burnt clay tablets full of written records dating back 4,000 years before the Christian era, and so 2,000 years before the time of Abraham. The destructive critics say that the war of the kings as recorded in Gen. 14 is all a myth, as at that early age of the world such armies could not have been collected. But on some of the 40,000 tablets in the possession of the University of Pennsylvania taken from the site of this ancient city, the names of the very kings who carried on this war are given just as they are recorded in Gen. 14, and some of the spoils which they carried off from Chalneh have been found in excavating the ancient city of Susa.

"These excavations have upset the already tottering chronology of Usher and have put the existence of man on the earth back some 10,000 years before the Christian era, and they show the existence of a high civilization at that early period. The work of exhuming Chalneh began on what seemed to be merely a mound of sand in a desert of drifting sand. The dome of a building was soon reached, which proved to be a magnificent temple of Baal, of whose worship this city was the center. The temple had been covered to the depth of more than forty feet from its base by the drifting sands. Among other curiosities found in adjacent buildings was the strong room of a real estate and banking house, containing certificates of deposit, title deeds, tax receipts and the like, all on baked clay tablets and beautifully written in cuneiform characters, and they read very much like similar 'papers' in a modern real estate dealer's office.

"Dr. Penniman had beautiful photographs of the buildings in the city, which were strong, massive and imposing, and very much like the best buildings in our modern cities. The names of the various kings and dynasties are given, with the dates of each, which extend back to a period 2,000 years before Abraham, or to the time of Adam, according to our common chronology.

"But the pick and the shovel went deeper, and the very surprising discovery was made that this ancient city of Chalneh was built on the site of a still more ancient city beneath it, of which there seems to have been no memory or tradition at the founding of the city of Chalneh. This city dated back at least 4,000 years more, or to a period 8,000 years before the Christian era. Its inhabitants, whoever they were, were very skilled builders, and had massive stone houses and temples several stories high, in which the arch is freely used. The arch was unknown to the Egyptians or to the Greeks or to any of the peoples whom we call 'the ancients,' and is considered a Roman invention. But the modern pick and shovel unearths it where the sands of the desert had buried it so deep that all memory and tradition of the mighty builders who invented it and used it some 8,000 to 10,000 years before Christ had passed away from among men; and what has been considered an invention of the Romans was really one of the 'lost arts' of a highly civilized people who lived and built and wrote and thought and perished, and the record of them and of their doings has lain for probably a hundred centuries so deep beneath the sands that their burial place was used by other men as a place for their building; and these in turn were buried in the sand, the removal of which shows that the Bible record is accurately true in its minute details, for while man must come and man must go, the Word of God abideth forever."

* * *

All should recognize clearly and distinctly what is implied by the foregoing. It means that the lecturer wholly disagrees with that open form of infidelity which denies the Bible *in toto*, claiming that the books of Moses, as well as the books of the prophets of the Old Testament, were written only a short time before Christ—after the return of the Israelites from the Babylonian captivity. The claim is that these books are pious frauds, having little, if any, foundation in truth. Dr. Penniman, the lecturer, was not in sympathy with such open infidelity. He was glad, therefore, when the excavations he mentioned disclosed certain outside information, corroborative of some of the statements of Genesis. We are glad that the Doctor is with us thus far; but we regret to note that he is so tinctured with the spirit of higher criticism that the researches which he mentions have not convinced him that the Bible is of divine origin, and, therefore, unqualifiedly true. He merely admits that it is not unqualifiedly false—that these findings prove that there is some reliability in the Scriptural account;—but he evidently is as far from accepting the Bible narrative as it stands, as are the most destructive of the higher critics.

The chronology of the Bible is so thoroughly interwoven with its narrative that the two are bound up together as web and woof: to destroy the one destroys the other; to invalidate the one invalidates the other; to corroborate the one corroborates the other.

There is no question whatever that the Bible contains a chronological chain down to the Babylonian captivity—even the captious find it impossible to disagree more than 128 years with what we have presented as the chronology of the Bible; —and then they must make that period *shorter* than we do instead of longer. No kind of reasoning or figuring based on the Bible statements of chronology can extend the period from the creation to the birth of our Lord beyond 4,128 years which we have assigned to the period. Dr. Penniman, as the dean of a university, and a lecturer upon this subject, is of course thoroughly aware of these facts. Yet how strange it is that he should address an audience as a champion of the Bible, and at the same time discredit the Bible by asserting, as he does, that man had been on the earth some ten thousand years prior to the Christian era! If this gentleman is a friend of the Bible, the latter has good reason to cry out, "Save me from my friends!"

If the Doctor is a disbeliever in the Bible, and is posing as its friend and champion, he is occupying a dishonest and dishonorable position. In any event, the Bible is far better off without such friends and such champions. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, they are serving the cause of infidelity—they are overthrowing faith in the Word of God. True, we are to expect just such things at this particular time, for the Apostle assures us that every man's faith-structure shall be tried so as by fire; and that all the wood, hay and stubble shall be destroyed. We are, of course, sure that those who have built their faith according to the direction of the Lord's Word, upon the proper foundation, and with the proper materials, the gold, silver, precious stones of divine truth, the Word of God,—these will never fail, will never be stumbled, but will come off conquerors. But we also know that this class is a remarkably small one, out of the millions of Christendom. Let us not be surprised, then, that the "fire of this day shall try *every man's* work, of what sort it is." Let us, on the contrary, take the more earnest heed and the more firmly hold on to the things which we have received of the Lord, which in the end will shine forth gloriously bright and convincing to the whole world of mankind.

HOW SHALL WE UNDERSTAND THEM?

The question naturally arises, if honorable men, students "learned in all the learning of the Egyptians," find in the ruins of ancient civilization evidences satisfactory to them that man has been on the earth at least six thousand years longer than the Bible records teach, how shall the average person of medium ability and intelligence and opportunities determine what is the truth on this subject? If he cannot rely upon the savants, upon whom or upon what can he rely?

We answer, that the savants base their estimates on their guesses,—and their guesses vary according to their mental makeup. Many of them guess that man has been on the earth for millions of years; others, like Dr. Penniman, congratulate themselves upon getting their faith down to a difference of only six thousand years from the Bible standpoint; but the humble child of God, who has made a proper use of the opportunities now within his reach, has learned to have little confidence in the guesses of the savants and higher critics, in proportion as he has learned to have great confidence in the Bible as a divine revelation. Those who will be easily moved to doubt the reliability of the Scriptures, under the instructions of its inju-

rious friends (?), will generally be those who have never come to a clear appreciation of the divine plan of the ages, revealed in that wonderful Book and in it alone. Those who have been for any considerable time in the school of Christ, and have been faithful to the instructions there received, have learned that the Bible contains a plan so wonderful that it is not possible that *man* could have conceived or originated it;—a plan which fits into all the features of past history, and is as fully in accord with the declarations of the Old Testament as with those of the New Testament,—though in many things out of accord with the teachings of churchianity.

As we open the Old Book, which some one has said is an anvil upon which numerous hammers of infidelity have worn themselves out, we find its declaration respecting our day,—"The wisdom of their wise men shall perish; the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." (Isa. 29:14) Dr. Penniman and other D. Ds. and LL. Ds. and Professors corroborate and fulfil this divine testimony today. Their difficulty is not so much a dishonesty of mind which hinders them from receiving the truth, but rather that they approach the subject from the wrong standpoint. Instead of approaching geology and scientific research from the standpoint of faith in the Bible, and a desire to find and prove it correct, they approach these from the reverse standpoint, with a conviction that the Bible is certainly wrong in some measure, great or small. Imbued considerably with the spirit of higher criticism, even when resisting its conclusions, they approach their investigations with a view merely to reduce the discrepancy between the Bible statements and the extreme position of infidelity. And it is needless to say that in such matters, where it is the mind that is concerned, and opinions that are to be formed, one usually finds corroboration in line with the sentiment of his search.

"Common people," in reading such statements as the foregoing by the Doctor, should not forget to take them with the proverbial "grain of salt." It is natural that the Dean of a college which has spent several thousand dollars in scientific research—partly with the laudable object of securing information, and partly with another laudable object of advertising itself—should feel disposed to inflate the results of these investigations and expenditures, and to parade them just a little.

Surely it is neither ungenerous nor unwise to conclude that Dr. Penniman's statements magnify considerably the service accomplished for the world by his college. The evidences of this, in the foregoing account, are numerous. For instance, it is not beyond the province of reasonable judgment to believe that the exploration committee found something of the ancient city of Chalneh. It is not beyond conception that this was buried as much as forty feet below the surface. It is quite believable that a palace and a temple were found, and that under the temple was found the ruins of a structure somewhat older still. But this is as far as reasonable judgment can follow the Doctor's narrative. We cannot take as literally true the statement that a whole city has been unearthed, or even any considerable portion of it, nor that another whole city under it was found—built, buried and forgotten thousands of years before the upper one was built, and yet the upper one *accidentally* built exactly on top of it—one temple over the other, etc. Neither can we take literally the statement that the buildings in these cites were "strong, massive and imposing, and very much like the best buildings in our modern cities." There are numerous reasons why we should not take these statements literally;—unless prepared to write ourselves down as credulous simpletons,—"common people" of the dark ages. The most forceful of these objections is the financial one. Any one of experience in the cost of grading, excavating, etc., can see at a glance that the few thousand dollars and the few representatives of the Pennsylvania University could accomplish practically nothing under such conditions as are *implied*. It would require millions of dollars to accomplish anything like what may be understood from taking the foregoing *too literally*.

If we analyze the above report, on this literal basis, we find that it contradicts itself. It declares that the principal building was the temple, whose dome, covered by sand, evidently constituted the chief eminence of the sand-hill excavated. How deep the sand may have been on the top of this dome, completely obscuring it, we can only surmise. We will suppose it to have been covered to a depth of five feet only, for the report declares that it was "soon reached." When, then, we read that the top of this sand mound was "*more* than forty feet" above the foundation of the temple, we will allow an extra foot, and say forty-one feet, and then deducting the five feet above the dome we find that the entire height of the temple, dome and all, was about thirty-six feet. And this was the principal edifice in the city—far out-topping the other buildings, evidently, according to the description given. How, now, does the statement appear that the buildings were "massive and imposing, and very much like the *best* buildings of our *modern* cities?" The best buildings in our modern cities range in height from fifty to four hundred feet or more, while in this city the chief building, dome and all, was about thirty-six feet high. We have need to keep well before our minds such evidences as these that the language is not literal, but highly figurative, hyperbolical, and then we need to flavor the remainder of the Doctor's statements with the same kind of salt of reason and cool judgment if we would not allow them to interfere with the process of our mental digestion, when studying God's Word. "Salt is good!"

When we come to examine the findings in the libraries of these buildings, we are to appreciate them for what they are worth. We do appreciate them highly. They give evidence most conclusively that evolutionists are entirely wrong in their theory that man evolved from a monkey, and that present-day civilization is proof of this. These findings corroborate the Scriptural statement that there was a civilization in the past, though of a somewhat different kind from that of the present—that there were wise men in the past without present-day advantages, which belong to the period called "the time of the end," which we hold are incidentals of this day of preparation for the Millennium. That those people had some knowledge of justice, equity, business regulations, etc., is evident from the records found in these rooms. But nothing has been found in conflict with the Bible, nor in conflict with the chronology of the Bible. The conflict is wholly in the minds of the learned gentlemen whose wisdom in such matters has perished, as the Scriptures declare—because they have abandoned the true foundation, and are no longer seeking to harmonize archæological findings with the declarations of the Bible—especially as respects chronology.

Misled By Their Evolution Theories

They predetermine that because there are these good evidences of so pronounced a civilization in Abraham's time, there must have been long, long periods preceding that *for the development of man from a monkey condition up to that degree of intelligence*. Thus, in supporting their theories respecting evolution, they have an incentive to make the records as favorable as possible to a long period prior to Abraham. They find names of kings and dynasties, and attempt to separate them out in chronological sequence, but seem entirely to overlook the fact that conditions which prevail today in Europe may also have prevailed to some extent in Egypt, and in Babylonian times. For instance, suppose that some city in Bavaria, Germany, had been buried today from the world, and that the civilization of the present time in all other cities of Europe were completely blotted out. Suppose, too, that general world histories of the present time were not kept, but that, as in ancient times, every nation and city kept records and a chronology of its own, paying no attention to the year of the world, A. M., B. C. or A. D., or any other arrangement but simply reckoning by its own dynasties? Suppose also that some one should uncover the Bavarian city mentioned, and should there find records of the Bavarian line of kings, and in connection with it a record of the German emperors, and references to the many other lines of German kings and princes. He would there find records of the Napoleonic dynasty, and of the present Bavarian dynasty, and of the present imperial dynasty. How much likelihood there would be that, with nothing to guide him except Frederick I., William I., William II., William III., he would become all confused, and fail to realize that there are kings in Bavaria at the same time that others reign as emperors of the whole German empire. Thus he might allow so many years for the emperors, and so many years for the kings, and be doubling his count every time. Our savants look over a pile of ancient clay tablets, written in a language they do not *fully* comprehend; they see in them names of hundreds of kings, princes, etc., and string them out to support their theory of a long and slow development from monkey-man to the degree of intelligence witnessed in our day.

This seems to fairly represent the tangled and unsatisfactory records of these ancient civilizations unearthed by explorers. They give some evidence, but nothing in a chronological order that will in any sense of the word compare with the Bible record. The Bible gives us the only chronological record from Adam down to the Babylonian captivity that is worthy of calling history or chronology. Our wise men in universities, colleges, theological seminaries, etc., in passing by this only reliable record, and attempting to construct chronology from other sources, are doing the impossible thing, as well as the unwise thing. The Christian who recognizes the Bible as the Word of God, because of its internal evidences, and who harmonizes its statements *with themselves*, accepting the conclusions with implicit faith, is the only one who will stand the shakings and siftings of this present time. Such will be found

to be right when that which is perfect is come, and when all matters will be fully revealed.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent Word!"

* * *

The Southwestern *Presbyterian* of March 27 quotes Rev. J. P. Peters, director of the Nippur Expedition, as follows:—

"An immense mass of inscribed material has been secured from Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria and Persia. We have a very fair picture of the advanced civilization prevailing in the ancient civilized world in and from the latter half of the third millennium B. C.

"These records discredit the extravagant claims of China and India in regard to the antiquity of the civilization claimed by them. It was only in the latter half of the third millennium B. C. that civilization spread to China, and shortly after this India was occupied by a civilized race.

"These records, so far discovered, confirm the statements and the historical representations of Samuel, Kings and the Prophets. Hebrew history, as recorded in these books, is proved by the comparison to be honest and truthworthy.

"The statements of the earlier books of the Old Testament in regard to a high civilization, advanced religious development, and literary activites, which but a little while ago were held up as a proof of the inaccuracy and untruthfulness of the Bible record, are now proved to be literally true."

"LORD, WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?"

ACTS 9:6.

Anxious soul, dost thou inquire
How thou mayst thy fealty prove?
In this day of "thine espousal,"
In the dawn of thy "first love,"
While thy heart is now o'erflowing
With a new-found peace and joy;
Where wilt thou, a willing servant,
In his service find employ?

Listen! Wouldst thou tell the story
Of the Father's wondrous plan,
And its consummation-glory
Now appearing unto man?
Wouldst thou be a faithful witness
To the truth thou hast received?
Seek "his fulness" for thy portion;
Empty souls have naught to give.

Hear the Master's voice directing,
As to him thou drawest nigh,
"Tarry till endued with power
Of the spirit from on high."
Learning first, thyself, the lesson
Which thou wouldst have others know;
Eating daily at his table,
Thus in "grace and knowledge grow."

Following close in Jesus' footsteps,
That whate'er you say or do,
It shall be "your Father's spirit"
That shall speak and act through you.
Seeking the divine direction,
Blessings rich thou mayst expect;
As thou dost his ways acknowledge,
He thy pathway shall direct.

Thus in trials that await thee,
In the way, so rugged, steep,
God's own peace which passeth knowledge
Shall thy heart through Jesus keep.
Then thou mayst go forth and comfort
Those beneath affliction's rod,
With the comfort wherewith thyself
Hast been comforted of God.

—*John La Dow.*

SAMUEL'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

1 SAM. 12:13-25.—JULY 19.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"*Only fear the Lord and serve him in truth with all your hearts.*"

Samuel the Prophet stands out on the pages of sacred history a very noble character—very similar in many respects to Moses. He had served the Lord and the people faithfully for a long period, and then, at the urgent request of the people and with God's assent, he had anointed Saul their king. The latter had been received rather half-heartedly, but the battle with the Ammonites and the great victory which the Lord granted to his people on that occasion united their hearts to him who had been the visible leader in that victory, and Samuel perceived that the right time had come for a public coronation of the king, and the formal transfer of allegiance to him as the Lord's representative in the temporal affairs of the nation. Accordingly, a general convocation of the people was called to meet at Gilgal—one of the several prominent places for public gatherings—one of the places at which Samuel was in the habit of holding court when, as a kind of supreme judge, he went at different seasons of the year to various parts of the territory of Israel to hear and to decide causes and differences which the elders of the tribes could not adjudicate satisfactorily.

Upon the assembling of the people, the prophet Samuel opened his address (vss. 1-5) by calling upon God and the people to witness to his own rectitude of character in all of his dealings with them for the many years in which he had served them: to his justice in seeking to decide their various questions righteously: to his honesty, in that he never received even the smallest bribe, nor permitted anything to vitiate his judgment; neither had he been an oppressor of his people, but had always sought their good. With united voice the people concurred in the excellence and purity of his administration—a wonderful tribute, one which would be almost inconceivable in our day, in which we find that even the best and noblest officials are sure to have enemies, traducers, backbiters, slanderers. We are not to suppose that Samuel was merely eulogizing his own administration, but are, rather, to attribute to such a noble character a nobler object. He wished to make a lasting impression with this address and this transfer of authority to King Saul; and, to make his words more impressive and more effective in the interests of his successor and in the interests of the Lord's people, he impressed upon his hearers the fact that his entire life had been one of devotion, and that they might well understand that his words now were in full accord with all the course of his previous life. They would thus realize that he had their best interests at heart, that he was thoroughly loyal to the Lord, and that his example, as well as his advice, would be beneficial to them. Perhaps, too, he would thus set before the people a standard of what they might look for and hope for from their new king, and before the king a standard of the ideal after which he should pattern his rule.

Next, he called attention to God's faithfulness to them in the centuries past, from the time that he adopted them as his people and made a covenant with them through Moses and became their heavenly King. He recounted to the people the many deliverances which the Lord had wrought for them through various agents whom he had raised up. He would not wish them to think of the recent victory over the Ammonites as being the only one; but he desired that they recognize it, in common with all previous victories, as from the Lord, by whatsoever hand they were effected. He would have them discern that they exercised great ingratitude in forgetting that the Lord had all this time been their King, and in preferring an earthly king to the government he had established. Nevertheless, now that God had granted their request and given them an earthly king, they must not fail to recognize that he was only the representative of their real King, the heavenly One. Otherwise, their condition would be deplorable in every way. They had the king of their choice and God had set him over them: let the matter thus stand, and from this new standpoint they should go on to make the best of their

condition; and to do this, would be to give close attention to the commandments of the Lord.

Obedience to the Lord would bring blessings both to the people and their king, and disobedience and rebellion or any measure of irreverence toward the Lord and his commandments would bring upon them divine disfavor and injury. Not that the Lord would vindictively render evil for evil, but the hand of the Lord would be against them in the same sense that the current of the river is against the persons who attempt to go contrary to it. Divine justice has its steady flow. It is irrepressible; it opposes anything that comes against it, and favors anything that goes in harmony with it. We can recognize something of this principle in various laws of nature; as, for instance, gravitation. Let us also recognize that the principles of divine government operate in a very similar manner. As fire burns the evil or the good when they come in contact with it, and as the law of gravitation operates in respect to all, whether good or bad, who come into the line of its influence, so the principles of divine justice operate automatically.

The correctness of the foregoing statement may be questioned by some, who may say that in the majority of cases justice does not seem to operate; that those who tempt God are set up, and those who work wickedness and deceit often prosper. We reply that in order to understand our position it must be remembered that God's government has never been established in the world except over the one nation of Israel; and, hence, only in that one nation should we expect to find the laws of retribution operating automatically. The Lord said of Israel, "You only have I known [recognized] of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2) Again, the Apostle asks, "What advantage hath the Jew?" and, answering, declares, "Much every way; chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God." God entered into obligations with Israel that if they, as a people, would obey his laws and keep his statutes, they would be blessed in proportion to their faithfulness and obedience; and if they should fail of obedience, they would be correspondingly punished; that he would permit to come upon them various chastisements—diseases, etc.—as the natural results of the violations of the principles of his government. But such an arrangement has not been made with other nations at any time in the world's history. With spiritual Israel God's blessings and chastisements are spiritual, and do not extend to temporal affairs. In proportion to their faithfulness they grow spiritually strong and beautiful; and in proportion to their unfaithfulness they grow spiritually weak and receive chastisements and lose divine favor. It is not true with the spiritual Israelite as it was with the natural Israelite, that by obeying the Lord he would be blessed temporally in all his undertakings. On the contrary, to the spiritual Israelite the Lord gives the express declaration and encouragement: "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall [in this life] suffer persecution"; "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you": "Ye know that it hated me before it hated you"; "Blessed are ye when men shall say all manner of evil against you for my sake: rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven"—in spiritual things, not in temporal matters.—2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Jno. 3:13; John 15:18; Matt. 5:11, 12.

When the Millennial kingdom shall be established, and, in harmony with the petition of our Lord's prayer, God's kingdom shall come, and his will be done on earth as in heaven—then the laws of righteousness will work automatically again, and "every transgression shall receive its just recompense of reward," and every proper endeavor will bring its meed of blessing and uplifting influence—restitution. The divine regulations operating toward fleshly Israel in the days of Samuel differ from those to operate toward the whole world in the Millennial age, in that the latter will have a greater prophet than Moses, a greater priest than Aaron, a greater king than Saul. The Lord's Anointed will include all the graces, powers and qualities represented in these types, but on a perfect scale and backed by divine wisdom, justice, love and power, and will put down all insubordination and permanently establish righteousness upon a proper basis throughout the world, eventually destroying all who will not come into accord with its principles.

Samuel proceeded to do a miracle before the people—to cause a thunder shower in the middle of harvest. In Palestine they have the early and the latter rains. The spring rains usually end in April, and the fall rains begin in October or November. A writer on the subject says, "In ordinary seasons, from the cessation of the showers in spring until their commencement in October or November, rain never falls, and the sky is usually serene." The wheat harvest which the prophet pointed out to them as just in order, must have been the first of June and, hence, nothing could have been further from the expectation of the people than a thunder-shower at that time. The bringing of it at the prophet's announcement, was to remind the people how completely their affairs and interests were in divine power. They were to discern that the recent victory need not have been theirs except as the Lord had been pleased to favor them and grant them the victory; and that simply by bringing unfavorable showers upon their harvest the entire fruitage of their labors of many months might be quickly spoiled and they be reduced to starvation, and in that way become more thoroughly subdued than by any foreign invasion. The prophet calls their attention to the wickedness of their course in the rejection of God as their King, and to this power of God, which could easily be exercised did he wish to requite them according to their dealings with him.

The people saw the point. They discerned that if it were to rain a few days they would lose their all; they recognized that they were wholly in the power of God, and entreated Samuel to pray for them, confessing not only the wrongs they had done in seeking a king, but also their sins; "We have added unto our sins."

As the Lord's mouthpiece, the prophet assured the people that they need not fear God's taking vengeance upon them, notwithstanding their wrong course. On the contrary, they should more fully than ever determine to turn to the Lord whole-heartedly, and let their mistake and the trials and difficulties that would come to them as a result of it prove a blessing to them in drawing their hearts nearer and nearer to the Lord, their true King, who never sought anything but their highest welfare. So it should be with us. If at any time we find that we have taken a wrong course which is irretrievable, we may expect it to bring the disappointments as the Lord foretold; but he may permit it to bring, as well, some blessings in the way of contrition of heart, and humility toward the Lord, and greater zeal, watchfulness and faithfulness for the future. Thus, even some of the blunders of life may become stepping-stones to higher planes of grace and truth.

The sentiment of verse 22 is very beautiful, and, doubtless, was very encouraging to the Israelites in assuring them of God's continued love and favor toward them because of his having adopted them as his people. Applying this verse to spiritual Israel, we may take great comfort from it, too. If it was a favor to natural Israel to be adopted as the Lord's peculiar people, as the house of servants, how much greater is the blessing to spiritual Israel, adopted of the Lord as the house of sons under the chief Son, Jesus; "whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end!" (Heb. 3:6) It is well that the Lord's people be called upon to fear, to reverence, the Lord; but if the Scriptures were entirely made up of commands and reproofs, the Lord's people would all surely have been discouraged long ago. On the contrary, with the reproofs and corrections, the Lord gives us very precious testimonies respecting his love and mercy, his goodness and long-suffering kindness, to encourage us. All the members of the body of Christ laboring against the course of this world and against public opinion and against the weaknesses of their own flesh and against the great adversary Satan, need spiritual encouragement—assurances that the Lord is for them. The Apostle points this out, saying, "If God be for us who can be against us?"—what will all the opposition against us amount to if God be on our side? He again encourages us with precious words, reminding us of the unchangeableness of God and of the fact that he has already done great things for us and is preparing to do still greater things. If while we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly, much more shall his favor be with us now that we are adopted into his family and are seeking to walk in his ways as members of the body of Christ.

The grandeur of the Prophet's character shines out in the twenty-third verse again: he seems to have none of the petty animosities which some smaller creatures might have under the circumstances, and was a patriot to the core of his heart, as well as a faithful representative and ambassador of the Lord and mediator of his people. He says, practically: "Nothing that you have done toward me—rejecting me in choosing King Saul—shall in any manner or degree hinder my love for you and my prayers on your behalf. God forbid that it should! I should consider this a sin against the Lord who has placed me as a kind of representative of him to you, and of you to him; and I certainly would be failing of my duty and privilege did I neglect this important office of mediator. You may rely upon it that I not only will refrain from pleading against you with the Lord, but that I will petition him on your behalf."

The nobility of Samuel's course may well be copied by the Lord's people under various circumstances in life. When those who are near and dear to us flag in their love and devotion, they need all the more our sympathy and our prayers; and, as

our dear Master showed us, even our enemies are to be prayed for and have our good wishes—that the Lord would grant them in his providence such opening of understanding, such experiences as in divine wisdom would be for their highest welfare to bring them into full accord with himself, and thus back into harmony with us and all who are in harmony with him. The prophet indicates that, although he was ceasing to be their judge and ruler, he would not cease to be their instructor in the good and right way so long as the Lord's providences might permit him to serve them, and so long as they would accept his aid.

Recurring, however, to the principal point of his instructions, he points out that reverence for the Lord, serving him in truth with all their heart, was not only a proper course, but a course which would bring them the Lord's blessing. And as a help to our flagging zeal, we should continually remind ourselves of the Lord's great blessings to us. As we learn to appreciate the goodness of the Lord, if rightly disposed at all, the influences will be to strengthen us and to make us more and more loyal to him. Failing to seek with our whole heart the Lord's service after we have become his people and entered into covenant relationship with him, receiving of his favors and blessings in this life, and also, by promise, in the life to come, would mean wickedness which, persevered in, will surely bring destruction. Faithfulness to God should be the key-note of all our desires. "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."—Psa. 19:14.

"TO OBEY IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE"

1 SAM. 15:13-23.—JULY 26.

The words of our caption, the Golden Text of this lesson, are the Lord's rebuke to King Saul by the prophet Samuel, in connection with the announcement that Saul, by disobedience to the heavenly King, had forfeited his privilege of representing him on the throne of Israel. The rending of the kingdom from the hands of Saul meant more than his own displacement: it meant that his son and successive heirs should not continue the Lord's representatives in the kingdom.

For a number of years Saul seems to have prospered fairly on the throne, and the people of Israel prospered with him. It was several years after his coronation, noted in our last lesson, that his first severe testing in respect to his obedience to the heavenly king came to him. At that time a war was instituted against the Philistines, who had been encroaching upon the Israelites to the east. Saul waited several days for Samuel to come to offer the sacrfices of the Lord previous to the beginning of the battle. Samuel was providentially hindered, and Saul, after waiting for a time, offered the sacrifices to the Lord himself, contrary to the arrangement, and then proceeded to battle, the result being a considerable defeat to his forces. Apparently he was not evilly intentioned, but lacked proper respect and reverence for the Lord and his arrangements. This may be said to have been the beginning of Saul's rejection by the Lord. Samuel's words were, "Thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord . . . . now thy kingdom shall not continue. The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart."

The lesson of this incident is as applicable to spiritual Israel today as it was to Saul and natural Israel in their day—"Obedience is better than sacrifice." In how many ways we may see expressions of this same condition amongst many who profess the Lord's name today! Many are "workers" in the Lord's cause in the various denominations of Christendom, and many are their sacrifices of time and money; but inasmuch as they are not obedient to the Lord, they fail of the blessing they would have, and, indeed, in a considerable measure cut themselves off from greater privileges and opportunities. Yea, many of them, we fear, are cutting themselves off from the kingdom, from glory, and from joint-heirship with the Lord in that kingdom. We should learn from this lesson, given us in Saul's experience, that our heavenly Father wishes us to be very attentive to his Word, and not to think for a moment that we can improve thereon, or that times and circumstances will alter the propriety of our obedience to him. Had Saul been obedient and the results disastrous, he would at least have had a clear conscience; he could have said that he had been obedient to God and was not responsible for the results. But if he had been obedient God would have been responsible for the results, and we know that divine power would have brought about the proper results. Let us apply the lesson to ourselves in respect to our daily conduct in every matter of life: let us hearken to the Word of the Lord and keep close to it, not fearing the results, but having faith that he who keeps us never slumbers nor sleeps and is too wise to err, as well as competent to meet every emergency that could possibly come upon us as a result of our obedience. How many of the Lord's people in Babylon would be blessed by following the instructions of this lesson. They have said to themselves, time and again, "I see that present institutions and arrangements are contrary to the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ and the practice of the early church, but what can I do? I am identified with this system and am engaged in sacrificing for its upbuilding; if now I withdraw my hand it will mean more or less disaster. I wish I were free from human institutions and that I had my hands filled with the Lord's work along the lines of his Word, but I cannot let go, for necessity seems to be upon me. I must perform a sacrifice and this seems to be my most convenient place for so doing." The Lord is not pleased with such argument. His message to us is that to obey is better than sacrifice: leave the matter of your sacrifice in my hands;—it will amount to nothing anyway unless I accept it, and I accept sacrifices only from those who are first obedient. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and receive not of her plagues."

Although the Lord announced the rejection of Saul, the prediction was evidently not executed for several years after; perhaps ten years the decree stood, as it were a dead letter, for quite possibly Saul was properly exercised by the rejection and became more attentive and more obedient to the divine will, and David, who was probably anointed about this time, was not yet sufficiently developed to be the Lord's representative in Saul's stead.

Saul's next severe trial was in connection with the Amalekites—a nomadic and fierce people who, on several occasions, had done injury to the people of Israel. In sending the message the Lord gave special instructions that the Amalekites should be destroyed, saying, "Utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." Without mentioning other of Amalek's transgressions, he specifies here that the destruction is on account of Amalek's opposition to Israel in the way when they came up out of the land of Egypt several centuries previously.

This narrative is seized upon by sceptics to prove either one or the other of two things: (1) That God sent no such message; that it was either the imagination of Samuel or Saul or of some one writing fictitiously in their names. (2) If it were accepted as being the command of the Lord, it would prove him to be a monster—lacking in justice, pity, sympathy and love—that he should thus command the wholesale slaughter of human creatures and dumb animals. There is but one answer to make to this matter, and it should be and is satisfactory to all who understand it. It is this:—

First, the slaughter of the Amalekites did not mean, as is usually inferred, that they, being admittedly wicked, went forth to eternal torture. Death had the same meaning to the Amalekites that it had to their cattle—a termination of whatever was desirable in the present life, and the desirable things in the present life were probably not more to the Amalekites than to their herds. The Amalekites suffered far less, slaughtered by the sword, than if they had been made the subjects of famine or a pestilence, and had died of hunger or disease—the ending of life with little pain to themselves or trouble to others—the ending of comparatively uneventful lives anyway. They all went down to the great prison-house of death—*sheol, hades*—the tomb. God foreknew and had already arranged a great redemption not only for them but for all mankind, and that redemption, secured by the great sacrifice of Christ centuries after their death—will by and by secure to them release from their imprisonment, an awakening from the sleep of death. They will be amongst the class mentioned by our Lord, saying, "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth." They will come forth under much more favorable conditions, to learn of the grace of God in Christ and to be amongst the families of the earth who shall be blessed by the seed of Abraham, spiritual Israel. They will not be in the chief or life resurrection, but will be awakened unto the privileges of restitution by judgments, corrections in righteousness.

Saul's next severe trial was in connection with the Amalekthe Amorites, that they would have been cut off sooner but that their iniquity was not yet come to the full. One lesson to be learned from this is that even though those nations may not be under special covenant relationshp with God, there is a

certain divine supervision—that their iniquities go not too far, and that, when they have reached their full, punishment is to be expected. We know not the particulars respecting the Amalekites, but, knowing the character of God and his justice and mercy, we may be sure that, in some particular sense of the word, their iniquities had come to the full and running-over measure before this order for their execution was committed to King Saul.

Saul's error in this trial was his failure to carry out the command of the Lord explicitly. He slew all the Amalekites, old and young, except the king, whom he kept alive, possibly thinking to exhibit him in some kind of a triumphal display; but as for the flocks and herds, he consented with his people to spare all that were goodly and desirable—"The best of the sheep and of the oxen and of the fatlings and of the lambs, and all that was good, . . . but everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly." (Vs. 9)

It is at this juncture that the Prophet Samuel came to him and the colloquy of our lesson ensued. The general narrative—the indignation of Samuel and the Lord's positive announcement—clearly indicates that Saul had not misunderstood his instructions, but had with considerable deliberation violated them. Consequently we must understand his words addressed to Samuel to have been to a considerable extent hypocritical. He first salutes the Prophet with blessings, and assurances that he had performed the commandment of the Lord successfully. But immediately the Prophet replies, "What means, then, this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" The prophet understood at once that the work of destruction had not been complete, that Saul and the people of Israel were anxious to take a spoil. This was wholly contrary to the Lord's direction. They were not to destroy their enemies to their own advantage, but simply to act as the agents of the Lord in thus executing his decree, the sentence of justice. They were not to take booty and thus to become like the nations about them—a robber nation, profiting by the troubles they inflicted upon the enemies of the Lord. This is in full accord with the Lord's character and the foregoing explanation of it.

Saul, seeing that the prophet was not likely to sympathize in any measure with his violation of the command, began hypocritically to represent that all those fine sheep and oxen had been captured from the enemy to be sacrificed to the Lord, and incidentally this would have meant a great feast for the Israelites, because the flesh of animals so sacrificed was eaten by them. Samuel stopped the king in his explanation and told him of the Lord's words of the night preceding (which, in Jewish counting, would be "this night," because their day began in the evening). The message of the Lord calls attention to the fact that Saul was humble when he was chosen as the Lord's representative upon the throne, and at that time he was very willing to give strict obedience to the heavenly voice, but the intimation is that now he had grown more self-confident and therefore less reliant upon the Lord and less attentive to the Lord's commands; getting into the wrong attitude of heart, he had failed to properly execute a very plain specific direction. Knowingly and in violation of the Lord's command he had the spoil separated, and spared the best when the Lord had commanded the reverse.

If, in applying the principles of this to the Lord's people of today, we think of the Amalekites as representing sins and of how the Lord's command comes to us to put away sin entirely, utterly destroying everything that is related to it, we may get a good lesson. Like Saul, many are disposed to destroy the vilest things connected with sin, but to save alive the king sin, merely making him a prisoner. Many are disposed, too, to seek out the things which they realize to be condemned of the Lord to destruction—such things as would be choice and desirable to their taste—and frequently, like Saul, they claim that even these sins of the less obnoxious kind are held on to for the purpose of sacrificing them and thus honoring God. How deceitful above all things is the heart! How necessary it is that all who would be in accord with the Lord should be thoroughly true-hearted, thoroughly sincere, and that under the Lord's direction we should seek to take away the life of every sinful principle, evil teaching, evil doctrines, evil engagements, unholy words and thoughts and deeds.

Saul sought to defend his course, to put as good a face upon the matter as possible and to lay the responsibility for the saving of the spoil for the sacrifice upon the hosts of Israel, who, with himself, were so desirous of offering sacrifices to the Lord. Samuel's answer is the pith of this lesson and contains its Golden Text. He clearly points out to Saul what the latter should have known, and what all should recognize, namely, that offering sacrifices is far less pleasing to the Lord than obedience to his Word. No one could offer an acceptable sacrifice to the Lord unless obedient in his heart and unless the sacrifice represented that obedience. So with the Lord's people today. It is not so much of ill-gotten wealth that we may sacrifice to the Lord; it is not so much the proceeds acquired directly or indirectly by wrong doing that we may sacrifice acceptably. Our sacrifice must be from the heart, and, first of all, must be the will. He who gives his will, his heart, to the Lord, gives all; he who gives not his will, who comes not in obedience of heart unto the Lord, can offer no sacrifice to the Lord that could be acceptable. "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice," is a lesson which should be deeply engraved upon the hearts of all the sanctified in Christ Jesus. To have the spirit of obedience is necessary, too, and whoever has the spirit of obedience will not only obey the divine will, but will seek to know the divine will more and more that he may obey it. It is of this class that the Scriptures declare, "His word was found and I did eat it;" and again, in the words of our Lord, "I delight to do thy will, oh my God; thy law is written in my heart."

Saul had been very diligent in his opposition to witchcraft and idolatry throughout the land of Israel, and in so doing was accomplishing a good work in accord with the divine plan, the divine will; but the prophet calls his attention to the fact that his energy in such matters would not prove an offset to his deliberate wilful neglect of the divine injunction. The Lord's commands against sin and every evil thing are to be executed to the very letter, no matter how highly exalted the sin may be in dignity and place, and no matter how precious or valuable or desirable or toothsome the sin may be to our fallen natures. Though it be as dear as a right hand or as a right eye, there is no course open to the Lord's followers but to be obedient—even unto death.

Although fully rejected, Saul's removal was not yet due. Samuel associated himself with him in a public sacrifice, commemorating the victory over the Amalekites, and on this occasion he slew Agag with his own hand—departing then to his own home. He never afterward saw Saul, yet the Scriptures declare, "Nevertheless, Samuel mourned for Saul"—thus again showing us the beauty and strength of his character. He was ready to do the command of the Lord in any and every particular, yet was not without a feeling of compassion for those who were out of the way;—not a compassion which would make them his friends and lead him to coöperate with them in their wrong course, but a compassion which would have been glad to have coöperated with them at any time in a righteous course.

THE LORD LOOKETH ON THE HEART

1 SAM. 16:4-13.—AUG. 2.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"Man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart."*

Saul's rejection by the Lord because of disobedience meant not only his own ultimate removal from the kingdom, but that his family, his sons, should not succeed him in it. It meant, also, the Lord's selection of another man, another family, for the office of ruler in Israel and representative of the Lord upon the throne. The Lord's choice was David, to whom Samuel indirectly referred, saying, "The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou [Saul] hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee." (1 Sam. 13:14) David, at the time of this lesson, was about twenty years old; consequently, the words of the prophet just quoted must have been uttered about the time of David's birth. Thus we have another illustration of God's foreknowledge and design, in respect to those whom he specially uses in his service, from their very earliest moments. Similarly, God's choice of Jacob was declared before he was born; and similarly, the Apostle Paul tells us that he (Paul) was chosen of God from his mother's womb. We are to separate from this declaration any false thought respecting the divine choice, and note that none of these were chosen to eternal life, but each of them, all of them, chosen and fitted for special service. It gives us a suggestion of the possibility of paternal and maternal influences affecting the natural disposition of a human being from before his birth. He still has a will, and even though favorably endowed, it remains with himself to determine, to will, whether or not he will walk in the Lord's ways, and to what extent he will be obedient. There is no coercion of the will, for the Lord seeks such to worship [serve] him in spirit—willingly, heartily—and in truth.

David's grandmother was the gentle Ruth, who gleaned grain probably in the very fields with which David was familiar. His grandfather's name was Boaz, a page of whose history is recorded in the book of Ruth. His father Jesse, like his grandfather, was doubtless one of the elders of the city of Bethlehem, respected and honored as a noble man. Of his mother we know little, except that he mentioned her twice as "a handmaid of God."

Samuel mourned and prayed for Saul, and was apparently disappointed that this man, of whom he had expected such great things and under whose guidance he had anticipated great prosperity for Israel, should be rejected. Quite probably fearful forebodings of a civil war to result from the installation of a new king perturbed the prophet's mind. He knew that Saul would not quietly submit to lay down the scepter which he had taken up with so great modesty in obedience to the Lord's arrangement; his mental eye could see the probability of civil strife which might rupture the nation and cause great trouble. He should have had greater trust in the wisdom and power of the Almighty, but his trouble was more or less like that which assails all of the Lord's people even today. The lesson from this to our hearts should be that we will implicitly trust the Lord to manage his own affairs: that we will trust him where we cannot trace him, and be obedient to his directions, and, so far from mourning at the execution of his plans, will rejoice, knowing that all things are working together for good to them that love God—that all things will ultimately work blessings for those who are in accord with the Lord—blessings for the future life if not for the present.

When sent to anoint David, Samuel exhibited a power not elsewhere noticeable in his character. He did not hesitate to perform the Lord's bidding, but intimated that he clearly understood that it meant the risk of his own life—that Saul would kill him as a traitor if he should anoint a successor to the kingdom. The Lord made it clear to him that it was not the intention to make the matter known at once, and directed him that he should go to Bethlehem and make a sacrifice there, and, incidentally, improve the opportunity of finding and anointing the one who, in due time, would be made known and exalted to the throne. At the time, he was merely to perform the initial work, which David's father and brethren would not understand, thinking, perhaps, that the anointing meant special blessing or a commission from the Lord to engage as one of the members of the school of the prophets or something else of this kind. Quite probably, however, the Prophet privately informed David of the meaning of the anointing, just as he had privately informed Saul when he secretly anointed him to the office of king.

The lesson takes hold of the subject at the point when Samuel had arrived at the town of Bethlehem. The Elders were in fear, thinking that his presence signified some sin on their part or on the part of some of their fellow-citizens which God had sent him to reprove and to punish; hence, their inquiry whether or not he came peaceably—whether or not his presence meant a blessing or the infliction of a penalty. Their fears were allayed when they heard that his mission was a peaceable one—to offer a sacrifice there unto the Lord. Some time before this the ark had been captured by the Philistines, and the tabernacle services thus discontinued had not yet been reestablished; for this reason this sacrificing was performed by the Lord's specially appointed prophet. The command to the people of Bethlehem to sanctify themselves if they would be participators in the blessings of the sacrifice, signified that they should wash their persons and put on clean clothes and draw nigh to the Lord with their hearts. Thus they typically represented that justification and sanctification which the church of this Gospel age enjoys. Samuel seems to have taken supervision of the family of Jesse to the intent that he might without public display find the man whom the Lord had chosen and anoint him to the office and give him the divine blessing in preparation for it. Jesse properly introduced his sons to the prophet, according to the order of their birth, his eldest, first; and as he was of fine appearance Samuel naturally assumed that he was the Lord's choice! but as he looked to the Lord for direction in the matter he got the response (in what manner we know not) which constitutes the Golden Text of this lesson. Judging from the human standpoint of appearance, age, ability, etc., Eliab was the most suitable person in Jesse's family to be the king over the nation; but not so in the Lord's sight. The Lord was looking at the heart and had already selected David as a man after his own heart, although at this time being under age, etc., his father had not thought worth while to send for him to be present at the feast. As one after another appeared, and the prophet found not him whom the Lord's spirit indicated as the one to be anointed, he inquired, "Are all thy children here?" when Jesse suddenly remembered that he had another boy, his youngest, in the field with his sheep.

Our Golden Text appeals to all in connection with the high calling of this Gospel age, and year by year experience shows us its general applicability. We, too, as the Lord's messengers, are seeking for those to be anointed with the oil of gladness, the holy spirit, that they may be kings and priests unto God in the kingdom he is about to establish, which will supersede present kingdoms. We too, like Samuel, might feel afraid to proceed with this work of anointing the successors of present institutions, did we not realize that the work of sealing the elect of the Lord, which is now in progress, is a secret work which the world cannot understand. Indeed, none understand this matter of the sealing, the anointing of the holy spirit, except those who have received it, and they are all of the David class. The name David signifies "beloved," and as it applied specially to our Lord and Master, of whom it was said by Jehovah, "This is my beloved Son," so also it applies to all the members of his body, each one of whom must be beloved, else he cannot be acceptable as a member. The Head says of such, "The Father himself loveth you," and again he says that we should love one another as he has loved us. It is not too much to say that all who receive this anointing of the Lord must ultimately be of this David, or beloved, character—the spirit of love must be in them, love for the Lord and love one for the other, else they are none of his.

In seeking for the Lord's anointed who shall by and by reign in Millennial glory for the blessing of the world, as antitypes of David, we notice that as he was counted by his brethren too insignificant to be considered in this connection, so also are those whom the Lord is choosing and anointing for his heavenly kingdom. Our Lord Jesus was disesteemed of his brethren, and when the suggestion was made that he should be the Lord's anointed, his people hid, as it were, their faces from him—disdained him, despised him, and considered him hopeless in respect to anything great or glorious,—"as a root out of dry ground." The same has been true respecting the members of his body, the true elect church; they also have been despised and rejected of men, and of them the Apostle declares, We are counted the filth and offscouring of the world; we are counted fools all the day long for Christ's sake.—1 Cor. 4:13.

Again he declares that "not many great, not many wise, not many learned, hath God chosen; but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the kingdom." And this principle of the divine selection of things that are not [esteemed amongst men], to bring to naught the things that are [esteemed by men], is noticeable all throughout this Gospel age. Often have we, like Samuel, looked about us amongst men seemingly eligible to a place in the kingdom—upon those who are high in position,—socially, intellectually, morally, educationally,—and in the esteem of men, and expect that surely the Lord would sanction their anointing with the oil of gladness, and grant them a knowledge of the truth pertaining to the kingdom, etc., only to find ourselves mistaken, and to get a fresh lesson that God looketh not on the outward appearance but upon the heart. We concede that we are unable to read the heart, but we are fully satisfied to accept the divine decision in such matters, and to trust that when in due time all the secrets of this present time shall be disclosed, we then shall be able to understand the meaning of the Lord's selections more completely than we do now—we shall then be able to see what a difference there was between the hearts of those the Lord accepted and the hearts of those outwardly humble, whom he did not so highly favor in respect to the kingdom call. Meantime, we must simply wait and trust the Lord and accept his decisions, as expressed by our dear Redeemer when he said, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemeth good in thy sight."—Luke 10:21.

Instructed respecting the Lord's methods, we are not to despise the least, the most ignoble or illiterate of those who give evidence of a purity and honesty of heart toward God, and to whom he seems to give the anointing of his spirit and the "ear to hear." Rather, while making known the message to all as we have opportunity, we are to rejoice specially with those upon whom the Lord's favor is manifested, regardless of their earthly surroundings, etc. The Lord knoweth them that are his, and it is for us to recognize, to honor and to coöperate with all such, as the ambassadors and representatives of our Lord and Master.

Often have we thought as we have looked over a congregation of the Lord's people and beheld some not prepossessing in personal appearance, some not well educated or refined, some ignoble, but, nevertheless, bearing the marks of the

anointing of the Lord, the light of the truth shining in their faces, the confidence and hope of the truth inspiring them, and their lives indicating a transformation from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son,—often have we thought of such, that had the Lord sent us forth to seek his bride, we might have ignorantly passed by some of his choice jewels and have gathered in some whom he rejects as unworthy—because we are unable to read the heart. This thought should make us very humble, gentle and meek toward all, and very trustful of the Lord and very much inclined to look for his leading in respect to our labors as his servants, just as Samuel looked to the Lord in connection with the anointing of David.

Samuel's words, "We will not sit down until he come hither," referred to the feast of which they were about to partake. It was the custom that, after the sacrifice had been offered, the sanctified persons present and those in spirit sharing in the sacrifice might join in a feast, eating the flesh, and thus celebrating a communion with the Lord. It was this feast that Samuel decided should not be commenced until David's arrival;—indeed, by reason of his being the Lord's anointed, he would be the most important one present at the feast. Perhaps in this also we can see a figure of the Lord's blessing in the divine plan. A great feast of fat things has been designed for the whole world of mankind, but it cannot be participated in until the justifying and sanctifying sacrifice has been killed —and, more than this, the feast cannot be commenced until first the Anointed One shall come and shall receive the anointing. The anointing began with our Lord, the head of the church, and has throughout the Gospel age been flowing down upon all the members of his body, the church. The sacrifice has been killed, and we, as members of Christ, have been participating in the sacrifice. Shortly the whole matter will be accomplished and then, as the Lord's anointed, the feast of fat things will be spread,—the Anointed One—head and body, being the principal in that great antitypical feast.

The blessing and power of the Lord accompanied David's anointing in some manner—just how we may not understand, because the manifestation of the spirit was not the same in that time as it is with us, the church, since Pentecost, respecting which the Apostle declares, "The holy spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:39) However, in some manner God's blessing and power were with David, enabling him to progress in knowledge, etc., and fitting and preparing him for the duties of the office to which he had been anointed. May we not consider as an antitype to this, the anointing which comes upon the church from the time of her acceptance with the Lord? Ours is not a physical anointing, nor are the blessings conferred of a temporal character: it is as new creatures that we are anointed; as new creatures that we grow in grace and knowledge and love; and as new creatures that, by and by, we shall be perfected in the first resurrection and come to the throne with our Lord and Master as our head.

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"THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES"

VOLUME 1 "MILLENNIAL DAWN"

VOL. XXIV ALLEGHENY, PA., AUGUST 15, 1903 No. 16

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

SINGULAR VIEWS OF THE DEATH OF POPE LEO XIII

The death of Leo XIII. at the age of ninety-three years is said to have created "a profound impression throughout Christendom." The President of the United States even felt it his duty to dictate a message to the Associated Press as the representative of seventy millions of people, more than one-seventh of whom were the pope's followers:—

"The President expressed his profound regret at the death of the venerable pontiff, whose long career, no less than his exalted character, has commanded the respect of all Christendom. The president said that in uttering these sentiments he was giving expression to the feelings of all the people of the United States, wholly without regard to their religious faiths."

We have no desire to say one word against any man, and surely have no grudge against this one of the more than fifty thousand millions of the dead; but we admire consistency, and fail to see how the deceased is worthy of all the adulation heaped upon him. We doubt not that he had an "exalted character," as the President intimates, but we have had no opportunity for judging of this, as we had not his personal acquaintance —as the President may possibly have had. We certainly should expect good morals and good character generally from one making the high claims that Leo XIII. made. We personally know some very humble people who have "exalted character," and therefore should not be surprised that a man *claiming* to be Christ's personal representative as King of the World should be given at least a decent reputation by his supporters, who claim that he was *infallible*. The fact that some of his predecessors on the papal throne were admittedly infamous, morally and otherwise, perhaps should, by contrast, lead all to proportionately greater respect for this man, whose gross immoralities, if he had any, are unknown. Yes, we may well rejoice that the deceased was not viciously disposed as some of his predecessors on the "throne of Christendom," who deluged the world with the blood of martyrs—in their endeavor to enforce the same false theories which this pope as tenaciously held but more covertly advocated.

But while thanking God that the fallen representative of the great antichrist* was much less ferocious than many of his predecessors, let us allow also that all this change is not due to the man who died, but in great measure to the changed conditions—Papacy's loss of civil power, together with the greater enlightenment of the masses, incident to the new conditions which have prevailed since A. D. 1799. In this "time of the end," as foretold by the Prophet Daniel (Dan. 12:4), many are running to and fro, and coincident with this commingling of the people has gradually come the equally predicted dissemination of knowledge amongst the masses of so-called "Christendom" (Papacy's kingdom); and as a result the "bulls" and "thunders" of Antichrist *dare not* be of the same character as previously. Times have changed greatly since Papal bulls instructed the kings and princes of Europe that they must persecute heretics to the death through the Inquisition if they would maintain favor with the pope, who was proclaimed "A very God on earth." Otherwise their subjects would be released from obedience to them and enjoined to favor and fight for some "more worthy" "son of the church." In view of these known and widely recognized facts, let us thank God rather than Leo XIII. for the beneficence of antichrist during the last few pontificates.

It is not necessary for us to suppose the pope to have been evil intentioned because he was for a time the head of the antichrist system; rather we may well give him the benefit of any doubt on the subject and suppose that he belonged to the vast throng of those mentioned by the Apostle as "deceiving and being deceived." Satan, himself, is the great antichrist who, by his wiles and arts, has deceived almost the whole world into one form or another of misbelief and opposition to God and his great plan of the ages. Thanks be to God for the blessed hope of the Scriptures, that the true Messiah shall shortly take the throne of earth and subdue all things unto himself, bind Satan and illuminate the whole world. "This is the true light which lighteth [shall enlighten] *every man* that cometh into the world."

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Telegraphic reports told how before the pope's death he received at the hands of a fellow-mortal "*absolution*," freeing him from sin and its penalties, and how, when he did not die as expected that day, he asked for its repetition the next day, when he seemed to be sinking. Yet for all this, according to Roman Catholics, Leo XIII. went straight to purgatory. Evidently they doubt that his "exalted character" or his claimed high office as Christ's vice-regent on earth, or his "absolution"—any of these or all of them—were acceptable to God, and so the poor old man, they think, went to "limbo" to expiate his sins.

* See "Great Swelling Words," MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II, page 304.

How do we know this to be the Catholic view of the matter? Because, as usual everywhere throughout Papacy's kingdom, "pontifical requiem *masses* for the *repose* of his soul" are being performed—for the stilling of his soul's anguish in purgatory. Surely this would not be done for him if he were believed to be in heaven—in glory! Poor old man! Time after time, during his long career, he had fresh sacrifices of the mass said for his sins, and thus, theoretically, had thousands of years of purgatorial suffering remitted, and finally had all sin absolved, and yet to be obliged to go to purgatory to suffer and scorch—for how long no Catholic knows! He and his followers surely have our sympathy in the calamity of so unsatisfactory a faith.

We inquired of a more than ordinarily intelligent Catholic how these seeming inconsistencies were harmonizable, and got the reply—"Well, you know, in matters of such importance we feel like using every precaution." Poor things! It is all a matter of doubt and uncertainty. Blind faith in the words of men (proclaimed infallible by men but not by God) can never give "strong consolation" nor "full assurance of faith." As the poor Romanist thinks of his pope ("a very God on earth") in purgatory, he shudders for his own fate and that of his friends. Nor are Protestants much better off. By rejecting the doctrine of purgatory and making the rewards of the present life to be heaven or hell—eternal bliss or eternal misery—they in some respects increase the difficulty. They must admit that only "*saints*" have the heavenly promises of the Scriptures, and few of them claim saintship. Besides, even the saintly must concede that but few of their neighbors and kin are *saints*. They are thus driven to doubt, or to the unreasonable hope that those who were unkind, dishonest, unneighborly, or brutal and bestial and savage are the kinds God is taking to heaven. In which case their reasonable hopes of heavenly bliss and harmony and joy would be rudely shaken.

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How refreshing to turn from all this unscriptural nonsense —from all this darkness of the dark ages—and to glance at the reasonable and plain teaching of the Bible on this subject of sin, its punishment, and the divinely provided salvation from these. Death, the penalty for sin, is comprehensible—reasonable, Scriptural. The resurrection hope, based upon the fact that "Christ *died for our sins*" (paid the penalty against us), is also reasonable. That God is now calling and electing a "little flock" of "saints" out of every nation, people and tongue to be associated with Christ in the kingdom work of the Millennial age, is also reasonable. And that all others than the saints must wait for the kingdom of God (of which Papacy's kingdom was but a counterfeit)—wait in the tomb (where Pope Leo XIII. is now waiting), in which there is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device, until the kingdom time—is also reasonable.

It gives us pleasure to *know* on the strength of God's Word that Leo XIII., and all the millions of the dead Catholics and Protestants, are waiting in the great prison-house of death until, at the command of the Redeemer, "all that are in the graves shall come forth."

In due time Leo XIII., and all the other popes and people of the world, blinded by Satan, "the god of this world," will come forth to a purgatorial condition, but a very different one from that preached by Romanists. The Millennial kingdom will be a purgatorial kingdom—established for the purpose of blessing all the families of the earth by binding Satan and destroying his blinding influence, and by chastisements (administered in love) purging from all people (or from so many as will submit joyfully) all their sins and weaknesses and blemishes. This purgatorial kingdom will last only one thousand years and will accomplish its designed purpose (Isa. 55:11). At its close all not in fullest heart-harmony with the Lord will be "destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3:23), and throughout the whole of the cleansed world praises shall ascend to God and to him who loved us and redeemed us with the one sacrifice of himself, which needed no addition of repeated *mass sacrifices*. And thereafter there shall be no more sorrow or dying or crying, because all the former things of sin and darkness and error shall have passed away.—Rev. 21:4; Isa. 35:10.

VIEWED FROM ANOTHER STANDPOINT

Evidently others view the above matters quite differently, for, according to newspaper reports, prayers have been ascending to God all over the land, from Protestants as well as Catholics, that the aged pontiff might not die. Evidently many good people are of opinion that 93 years was too young for this man's death rate. They seemed to consider their opinion on the matter worthy of divine consideration, but God was unmoved by their numbers and influence. Again the Apostle's words are verified: "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss."

However, one error always leads to another when the fault is with the heart, and hence, so far from realizing divine disapproval in the rejection of their prayers, we may expect that Protestants thus carried away with admiration for the head of Antichrist will be still further misled. Indeed the indications are that "mother" System (Rev. 17:5) and her daughters are surely coming into fuller harmony than has ever before existed between them. This will be recognized as in perfect accord with what we have already pointed out to be the teachings of Revelation,—that in the close of this "harvest" time Papacy and Protestantism will coöperate to arbitrarily coerce the people of Christendom and thereby lead to the great catastrophe of anarchy;—"a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation."—Dan. 12:1.

The following from the *Sun* (N. Y.) is to the point:—

"On Sunday prayers for the dying pope were offered up in several Protestant churches, of whose services we have particular reports and, probably, in many more as to which we have no such information.

"They were indicative of a change in the attitude of Protestantism toward the Roman Catholic church which is one of the most remarkable religious developments of recent years. Even not more than a quarter of a century ago that church, by far the greatest in Christendom, was usually excluded from consideration by Protestants when they were discussing the means and agencies for the propagation of Christianity. The article on the Pope in the Westminister Confession, in which he was described as 'that Antichrist, that man of sin and son of perdition,' represented the prevailing Protestant belief.

"Twenty-five years before, this whole country had been stirred by a political agitation against the Roman Catholic church which seemed to some prophets ominous of a religious war. That church, then comparatively feeble, has now grown into the strongest in the Republic, yet, instead of the bitterness of hostility against it, proclaimed and predicted by the old Know-Nothingism, there have come harmony and respect. In Protestant churches prayers were offered up for the suffering and dying pope. The Roman pontiff has become a Christian brother, and Protestants join with Catholics in celebrating the spiritual exaltation of his character and the services he has rendered to Christianity. He was described by a Methodist preacher of New York on Sunday as 'leader of the great army of the Lord's hosts,' a 'spiritual commander-in-chief,' a 'champion of the faith who has never wavered from the Catholic position and the theology of Thomas Aquinas,' 'who has done much for the progress of civilization,' who 'has restored the golden age of the Papacy in its best sense.' . . . . It cannot be denied, however, that frequently this new spirit of toleration is due to lessened partizanship because of lessened religious conviction."

THE CHARACTER OF NEXT TWO POPES PROPHESIED

Long ago, a Catholic whose name even is lost, affected to prophesy the characters of future popes. He did this by giving to each a "motto." And so accurate have some of his predictions been that Catholics respect them greatly. For instance, the Pope Leo XIII., motto was "*Lumen in cælo*" (Sunshine in heaven). His motto for the next pope is "*Ignis ardens*" (A burning fire), and that for his successor is "*Religio depopulata*" (Religion laid waste).

The reign of Leo XIII. certainly has been a very sunshiny one for papal interests, and it would be well in accord with our anticipations of the future should his successor have a brief and strenuous experience, to be followed by the general collapse of Daniel 12:2.

"OUT OF THINE OWN MOUTH"

A sister in Christ, once a Presbyterian, handed us a copy of the *Central Presbyterian* of February 18th, with several items marked, saying: If ZION'S WATCH TOWER contained such caustic criticisms of "Babylon" and her methods, they would be thought severe and uncharitable, even if admitted to be true. We present four extracts; the last going far toward sustaining the true Gospel of "good tidings of great joy, which shall [yet] be to all people":—

"Dr. J. M. Buckley, the renowned editor of the New York *Christian Advocate*, at the meeting of Methodist ministers in that city, disputed the statement of Dr. Thompson of Chicago, that a million and a half converts had been made by the Methodist church in the last four years. He declared that statistics showed that Methodism was actually declining, at any rate in some of the Eastern conferences.

"Dr. Buckley added that many ministers will plainly state in public their frank doubt as to the truth of the Pentateuch. He continued:

"'Some of our ministers even do not hesitate to state in their pulpits that in a few years Abraham will be generally regarded as a name, and not as a person.

"'For twenty years I have not heard a real sermon on such a topic as the new birth. I do not say there have not been such sermons, but I have not heard them. I have heard but one sermon on sin properly presented. Now, I wish to say that if the gentlemen of the press report me as saying there is no such thing as a real revival and real converts, they will be wrong. But I do say that the predicting of a great revival tends to prevent its coming.'

"Again, we say to the Christian ministers of the South, 'Stand firm, brethren, declaring the whole counsel of God!' A touch of the modern departures will make your sermons and all your ministry fruitless of anything but apples of Sodom!"

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"Certain so-called religious magazines and papers are *constantly* saying we need a higher state of morals in poltics, in business, in social and civil life; saying, Preach moral duties, put high ideals before men; yet they fail to inculcate those very truths by which only *high* morals can be sustained—the regeneration of the soul by the spirit of God, as the only reliable ground for good morals and upright living. They are trying to make men better by some other way than God's way. Dr. Chalmers tells us how, before his own regeneration, he preached all this sort of doctrine with God's power on the soul *left out;* but it was only when he became converted himself and fell back on the great truths of Scripture that his pulpit became a power. No preaching has ever really changed society deeply —made men *earnest* men, thoughtful men, holy, God-fearing —that has not dealt in the great primal truths of Revelation. The men whose preaching ignores God's grace, God's power in the soul, do not make Christians. That preaching which says develop your own natural virtues into piety, which does not proclaim the absolute necessity of being born again, is trying to warm up the frozen by painted fire, not by the real, burning flame. In much preaching in these United States God has as little part in what is preached as if we possessed no Bible. There is really no Savior in it at all. Men are not taught there is no salvation possible except through faith in Christ."

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IRREVERENT WORSHIP AND PREACHING

From a letter in the *Nashville Christian Advocate:*

"The editor of this paper well asks in a recent issue, 'When shall we have done with the abusive evangelist?' and he might easily have added a number of other adjectives similarly descriptive of that brother's preaching. By permitting in our pulpits and worship any and every sort of spectacular displays we are only cultivating in our people a lack of reverence for things the most solemn and sacred. There ought to be in none of our churches any sort of sham or catchy shows. Deliver us from fads in religion, from slang and sensationalism in the pulpit, and from cant and claptrap in revival services!

"For one I wish to enter my most earnest protest against our preachers and people taking stock in these characters who advertise themselves as 'converted clowns,' 'cow-boy preachers,' 'escaped nuns,' 'ex-priests,' and others of that ilk. Let us have holy living, plain, honest, quiet piety, faithful performance of duty, and fearless preaching of a pure gospel.

"In closing an announcement not long since regarding a sermon to men only, the significant statement was made: 'There's no filth in this sermon.' That is a sad commentary on the character and contents of many sermons to men only. If there ought to be no double standard in morals, there ought to be none in preaching. What a pure woman may not hear, no self-respecting man ought to hear, much less ought it to be spoken in the pulpit. Can we imagine Christ or Paul excluding women from their meetings because they are too refined and delicate to hear some things which it is deemed advisable to say only to men? May God speed the day when our ministry will cease entirely from pandering in any way to the morbid curiosity of people for the irregular, the grotesque, the tragical, the irreverent, and, too often, the disgusting in affairs pertaining to our religious life and work and worship.

"I heard one of the strongest thinkers of our church, and a man of deep and sincere piety, remark a few years ago: 'It disgusts me to hear some man say in simpering tones, "My Jesus keeps me sweetly."' To which remark my heart responded Amen. It is a weariness to hear the easy and flippant phrases sometimes used in addresses to God or in statements about him.

"It is shocking and humiliating to those who love the church to see the advertisements and descriptions which frequently appear in the secular papers of all sorts of freaks and abnormalities in the way of church entertainments and services. 'A Talent Lunch,' 'Freezing a Mother-in-Law,' 'Lap Socials,' are some that have of late come under our observation as 'church entertainments,' while some of the subjects announced for sermons fall little short of blasphemy. Besides the sad feature of lack of reverence in these things, they contain another feature equally as hurtful, for in them is a tacit confession of our skepticism as to the power of the Gospel to attract people, and also a confession of weakness on the part of church and ministry. We seem to have gotten hold of the false idea that we shall have more hold on the sinful world by conforming a little more to their ideals and standards. The world has never been made better by low ideals. It expects and has a right to demand of the church the very highest ideals in matters pertaining to things holy and religious. Let us have done with sensationalism in the pulpit, with sacrilege in our songs, with undue familiarity in our testimony and conversation, and with irregularities in our worship."

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GOD IS LOVE

"We recognize electing love as the hope of man; but we see clearly that the love of compassion for all the perishing is coextensive with the earth. The commission of our Lord is an unmistakable declaration that 'his tender mercies are over all his works.' Every creature of our race is included in the provision. We do not remember any one of our leading theologians who has ever suggested a single exception. Our Savior never manifested, even to Judas, a particle of malice.

"The Gospel is now, and ever has been, a proclamation of the Lord's love to sinners. It is a misrepresentation to say that this love is only for a secret number of sinners. Our Lord was not conscious on the cross of expiating the sins of the reprobate, but he was conscious of a mercy fully capable of that redeeming act. The heart of the glorious victim was capacious enough and unselfish enough to save any number of such worlds.

"Calvinism has suffered very much from its nominal friends as well as its open enemies. The ardor of discussion has sometimes involved in apparent views liable to misconception, but we cannot understand any of our representative men as imputing to God anything less than an infinite degree of benignity.

"'God is love.' That is his nature. He takes no pleasure in retributive severity. *Endless torment is inflicted by his enemies upon themselves.* Irreconcilable antagonism to such a God clearly deserves the curse of its own perpetuation and appropriate misery. Fixed aversion to piety is the sin that destroys all who perish. They are incurable enemies of a God of love. That enmity towards such a Creator is the ground of perdition. It makes sin 'exceeding sinful.' It was honorable from the first that God was infinitely worthy of the love of man, and when the creature chose a bodily appetite in preference to him, the awful change occurred and the race of enemies began. But God did not become the enemy of man. He continued to be his best friend. 'He so loved the world' as to provide, by a divine sacrifice, for its salvation. The *heart* of the Creator was ready to forgive sin in Eden, and has been so ever since; and the olive branch of remission hangs high upon the cross wherever Christian missions have erected it in the view of men."

ANXIOUS TO CHECK THE GERMAN SOCIALISTS

"It will be remembered that the salient feature of the parliamentary elections which were held in Germany a few weeks ago was the enormous success of the Socialists. They polled 3,008,000 votes, as compared with 2,120,000 in 1898, and they increased their representation in the Reichstag from 58 to 81. Those figures indicate a gain which is most significant, and which is all the more remarkable because the Government had done everything it could to prevent it. It reveals the prevalence among the masses of the people of a feeling of profound dissatisfaction with existing conditions, and the growth of a determination to bring about a more or less radical and sweeping change in the circumstances of German life.

"Naturally, the situation thus presented is regarded with alarm by those who, either through their ownership of property or their official position, make up the ruling classes, and there is much discussion as to what shall be done to stay the rising Socialistic flood.

"If the ruling classes have good sense, if they are acquainted with the teachings of history and are sufficiently intelligent to apply the experience of others to themselves, they will perceive the wisdom of meeting the Socialists at least half way and of placating them with some timely though moderate concessions."—*The North American.*

A SMALL CONCESSION TO ZIONISTS

While refusing thus far the appeal of Zionists for some sort of autonomous government for Palestine, the ruler of Turkey has recently sold to them a tract of land said to be capable of supporting a colony of 70,000. Presumably this sale carries with it some right of residence not granted under present restrictions. Zionists rejoice in this crevice of an open door and hope for more. So do we hope for them—in accord with the divine Word. Official information is hoped for at the next Zionist Congress, Basle, Aug. 23-29.

OUR SUFFICIENCY IS OF GOD

1 SAMUEL 17:38-49.—AUGUST 9.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"If God be for us who can be against us."*—Rom. 8:31.

The Philistines occupied a considerable portion of the sea-coast confronting the land of Canaan at the time the Israelites took possession, and their rights seem to have been respected by the Israelites, for even when the land was divided by lot, before it was subdued, the portion occupied by the Philistines was not included in that recognized as given by God to the Israelites. Indeed we remember that the Lord used this powerful nation as his rod in chastening the chosen people when the unfaithfulness of the latter required it on more than one occasion. Thus in the time of Samson the Philistines were the masters of Israel, Samson being used of the Lord as one of his agents in the removal of their yoke—although the work begun by Samson was not completed until the days of Samuel, the prophet.—1 Sam. 14.

Our lessons show us another invasion of Israel's borders by the Philistines, Saul at this time being king, though David had already been privately anointed but not publicly proclaimed as his successor. The Philistine hosts had advanced a considerable distance into the territory of the Israelites, and had reached the more mountainous country, where Saul gathered the army of Israel to meet them. A valley lay between the two hosts, and in the center of this valley there was a ditch about ten feet deep, cut through the rock by a mountain stream. The place was favorable for a battle of the kind usually fought at that day. Neither army seemed to be anxious to attempt to cross the steep banks of the brook in the face of its opponent, for under such conditions the attacking party would be considerably disadvantaged. Besides, the Philistines—knowing that Israel's king stood head and shoulders above his fellow-Israelites—had pitted him against a giant Philistine, Goliath, still taller, about ten feet high and probably stout in proportion, as indicated by the weight of his armor, spear and sword. The challenge set forth that the disputes between the two nations, of many years' standing, should be settled, not by a general battle, but by a duel between the Philistine giant and the most competent Israelite who could be found to come against him—who undoubtedly would have been Saul, the king.

For forty days this challenge was made every morning, and the king of Israel and his chief mighty men practically confessed that they feared the giant and would not respond to his challenge. It was at this juncture that David, a young man of about twenty-one, was sent by his father to his brethren in the army of Israel to see how they fared, to take them some delicacies from home, and to bring back word respecting the prosperity of the Lord's hosts. The infidel is prone to twit the Lord's people upon the statement of Scripture that David was a man after God's own heart—referring to some of his weaknesses and shortcomings; but in this lesson we see clearly the feature of David's character which God so highly esteemed and which he has always esteemed in everyone to the extent that he possesses and manifests it. This quality which God esteemed in David was his faith—the same quality that he esteemed in Abraham and in all the faithful of the past. Of all who had "this testimony that they pleased God," it is written that by faith they did thus and so, "and it was counted unto them for righteousness."—Gal. 3:6.

David's faith in the Lord being great, he was surprised to learn when he came to the army that the Philistine had been boasting himself for forty days against Israel and Israel's God, and that no one of his nation had possessed sufficient faith in God to accept the challenge. He at once proposed that he would accept it himself and asked to be taken to the king that he might be thus commissioned. Those who mentioned him to the king spoke of him as a "mighty, valiant man," yet when Saul looked upon him he perceived that he was but a youth and was physically no match for the giant. However, he was the only champion who had arisen, and he was full of confidence in his own success as an instrument in the Lord's hands for delivering Israel from the boastful heathen. Saul finally consented, and proposed to loan Israel's champion his own armor; but, unused to such accoutrements, David found when he had donned them that he could not feel properly at home in them. It would require considerable time to learn how to use such armor and implements advantageously and without discomfort, and he decided to go in his usual garb as a shepherd, armed only with his shepherd's club and sling and the scrip or leather bag in which to carry the stones which he selected from the bed of the brook as he passed.

Goliath could scarcely believe his eyes when he saw that the ruddy youth who approached him had come out to do him battle with a club, for he probably did not notice the sling. He felt indignant and inquired whether he—the great, the mighty, the strong, the well-armed—was regarded as a dog to be attacked by a club; and, cursing David by his gods, he declared that he would make short work of him, and that the fowls should have his flesh.

David's retort shows clearly that he appreciated the situation in all its bearings. He was aware that his opponent was armed with sword and spear and javelin, but, as he states the matter, he was approaching the conflict strong in the strength that God supplies—strong in his faith in the Lord as the decider of battles, as the one who would be able to give him victory and deliver his people from all their enemies. David noted, and counted well upon the fact, that the issue was not between the two armies, not between two men, but between the God of Israel and the false gods of the Philistines. Faith in God had doubtless been increasing amongst all the Israelites within the twenty years preceding this event. They were gradually coming to learn that, having been punished for their sins and idolatries and having returned unto the Lord, his favor was now with them because of his people, but David seems to have had confidence in God in more than an ordinary degree. Doubtless his own anointing to be Saul's successor in the kingdom gave him assurance that it was God's will that the kingdom of Israel was to be continued, and that God's favor was to be with them still as a nation, notwithstanding the transgressions of the divine commandment by Saul, noted in a previous lesson.

The Jews have a tradition that it was while Goliath threw back his head in laughter at his stripling opponent that David's sling-stone struck him in the temple. The helmets of that time were not nearly so complete as those used extensively in the middle ages, and apparently the neck and a portion of the head were generally exposed, so that David's stone might have struck the vital spot of the forehead even though Goliath's head had not been thrown back in laughter. Neither was David's marksmanship so extraordinary as to be considered wholly miraculous. We have the Scriptural record that many in the tribe of David could throw such sling-stones to a hair's breadth. (Judges 20:16) Xenophon mentions the expertness of certain Persian slingers, and Livy speaks of slingers so expert that they could send a stone from a distance through an ordinary wreath or chaplet, and could not only strike their enemies in the face, but in whatever part of the face they chose.

We cannot call this little incident a type, but we may properly see in it a figure and a lesson respecting spiritual things applicable to all who belong to the antitypical David—Beloved—the Christ. Goliath fitly pictures the great adversary, Satan, and all who are on his side of any controversy, seeking to bring the Lord's consecrated people into bondage either to errors or sins. Satan, as the prince of this world, found no one either willing or able to dispute his supremacy of power until our Lord Jesus, the antitypical David (Beloved), became the champion of God and the truth and such as love righteousness. As David risked his life for the deliverance of his people Israel, so our Lord Jesus not only risked, but sacrificed his life for the deliverance of antitypical Israel; as David, after being anointed, encountered the lion, so Jesus, after he had been anointed by the holy spirit at Jordan, was led of the spirit into the wilderness and endured a great fight with the Adversary. He conquered him with the Word of God, answering each of Satan's propositions for his overthrow with the words, "It is written." The Apostle explains,—For this purpose Christ was manifested, that he might destroy the bondage of death and "him that hath the power of death, that is the devil"—eventually delivering all the people of God.—Heb. 2:14.

David's conquest in some respects illustrates battles which all of the Lord's people must engage in. Goliath and the hosts supporting him may well illustrate to our minds various foes of God and truth and righteousness which challenge us and all of the Lord's people.

(1) The hosts of doubt and scepticism are today led about by the great giant of unbelief, whose size, armor, sword and spear are over all the hosts of nominal Christendom—all except the David class—the body of Christ. This giant is the evolution theory, and his armor-bearer is higher criticism. The records and promises of Israel's God are disdained, and the David class who stand forth in their defense are treated with contempt and their pebbles from the brook of truth disregarded. But science, falsely so called, though it boasts itself today and creates an impression that few would think of opposing it, will nevertheless meet its Waterloo. It shall fall before the Lord's anointed—David, "Beloved"—and its own sword of truth shall eventually complete its destruction in the morning of the new dispensation: at the same time all the hosts of error shall flee, and many of the people of God, aside from the elect body of Christ, shall be blessed by these deliverances.

(2) Goliath may properly represent pride, backed by a host of worldliness. One of the severe ordeals of the new creature is the conquering of the love of the spirit of worldliness under the leadership of pride. Worldly pride challenges faith in God and obedience to him, and only those who are of good courage and full of confidence in the Lord can overcome this giant. It is necessary, too, that the victory should be made complete—that pride should be thoroughly humiliated, killed, so that it can never rise up again to destroy us. It is an individual battle, and the only proper armament against this giant is a stone from the brook, the message of the Lord, showing us what is pleasing and acceptable in his sight, and assuring us that he that humbleth himself shall be exalted and he that exalteth himself shall be abased. As the poet has expressed it:—

"Where boasting ends, true dignity begins."

(3) Another giant which will sometimes challenge the people of God is fear, distrust. Mighty, imposing and terrifying indeed is the influence of fear, except upon those who have learned to know the Lord through previous experiences, and to trust him even where they cannot trace him. The giant of fear and despair must be met with the pebble from the brook, "It is written." The sling of faith must propel the word of promise with such force as to slay the adversary and to deliver us from his domination.

(4) Another giant which assaults the Lord's people, but which in the present time can be overcome only by the David class, the body of Christ, is the giant of sectarian influence. How strong, how majestic, how well-armed, how influential is this great giant, whose powers are exercised in a large measure in intimidating the Lord's true children, so that all their lifetime they are subject to bondage and fail to attain the liberty with which Christ makes free indeed! To meet this giant and to resist him successfully and to gain the victory over him, thoroughly armed as he is with the haughty voice, and large and strongly organized and equipped with worldly power and influences and boycotting opportunities, requires great grace, such grace as is to be found only in the little flock, the overcomers, the body of Christ—the David class, the "Beloved." Thus armed only with the Word of God, and trusting in his rod and staff, we may well be courageous and answer imposing sectarianism as David answered the Philistine, "Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear and a javelin: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, which thou hast defied."

Let us all remember the meekness and humility of David, note that his conduct was utterly devoid of boastfulness, and that we are to copy this. Like him our confidence is to be in the Lord, and not in ourselves.

By whom was David taught to aim the dreadful blow,
When he Goliath fought, and laid the Gittite low?
No sword or spear the stripling took,
But chose a pebble from the brook.
'Twas Israel's God and King who sent him to the fight,
Who gave him strength to sling, and skill to aim aright.
Ye feeble saints, your strength endures
Because young David's God is yours.

—*Cowper.*

STRONG CHARACTERS IN CONTRAST

1 SAMUEL 18:5-16.—AUGUST 16.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*"—Psa. 46:1.

Saul and David were both men of strong character, but the former neglected the divine word and counsel and undertook the management of his own affairs, while the latter accepted the Lord and his leadings and by faith sought to follow him. The results showed in both cases. Saul came to an ignominious end. David was prospered and exhibited a wisdom and strength of character quite beyond his times. We are not to forget in this connection that David's discreetness and obedience to the Lord kept him from the throne of Israel for years—years of trouble, privation and wandering, whereas the following of worldly methods might have led to much greater prosperity so far as outward appearances would be concerned. Nevertheless, we are to remember also that the nation of Israel had been adopted by the Lord as his chosen peculiar people, with whom he would deal, whose course he would supervise, and in respect to whose rulers he would decide. Neither are we to forget the great difference between the Jewish age, with the divine arrangements and regulations of the same, and this Christian or Gospel age, with its different regulations and its law of love, patent endurance and spiritual instead of carnal warfare. Those who consider the course of David and other faithful ones of the Jewish epoch to be patterns for the church, the body of Christ, show thereby that they have a total misunderstanding of the divine Word on this matter. To their mind David's battles and victories and slaughters are figures illustrative of spiritual battles and victories on the part of the antitypical David, the Beloved, —head and body—the Christ.

Although Saul had already been notified by the Lord through the prophet Samuel that the kingdom should be taken from his family and given to a neighbor more worthy of the trust than he, more faithful to the Lord, nevertheless he had been given to understand that the kingdom might endure in his hands for a considerable time. We may assume, therefore, that Saul was on the lookout for one to rise to prominence who should ultimately become his successor,—although we have no reason to think that he understood that David had already been anointed to this position, for Davd's anointing was kept secret.

Saul, although appreciative of David's prowess, was, nevertheless, jealous of him because of the prominence to which his noble course brought him in the eyes of the people. This jealousy was accentuated as he heard the praises of David sung in grander terms than his own were lauded. Jealousy is always an evil quality—no part of the Lord's spirit, the holy spirit, but a strong ingredient in the spirit of evil. Hatred, envy, malice, strife, works of the flesh and devil, are all closely related to jealousy, and often spring from it. Saul should have resisted the envious suggestions which came to his mind: he should have allowed his mind to rise above all personalities and to rejoice most sincerely, most heartily, in the praises of his young general. Doubtless it was in part his remembrances of the Lord's declaration that he should be bereft of the kingdom that made him look with jealous eyes upon David from thenceforth.

Jealousy is one of the great foes that confront every Christian. It should be slain on sight as an enemy of God and man and of every good principle; and to the extent that its presence had defiled the heart even for a moment, a cleansing of the spirit of holiness and love should be invoked. Jealousy is not only a cruel monster of itself, but its poisonous fangs are almost certain to inflict pain and trouble upon others, as well as to bring general woe and ultimately, destruction upon those who harbor it. Jealousy is sin in thought, wickedness in thought, and is very apt to lead speedily to sin and wickedness in action, the probable result being the defilement of men. The mind, if once poisoned with jealousy, can with great difficulty ever be cleansed from it entirely, so rapidly does it bring everything within its environment to its own color and character. This sin, when it is finished, if it is allowed to grow, if it is not routed, if it is not overcome, bringeth forth death. All of the Lord's followers should be on guard against this sin, and none need it more than those whom God has greatly honored as his mouthpieces or servants in any capacity. Had David and Saul not been in such high positions, jealousy and rivalry and enmity would have been comparatively impossible.

Under the circumstances we are not surprised to read (V. 10) that jealous Saul was troubled with an evil spirit—an evil disposition. Perhaps the language should be understood as meaning that an evil spirit—in the sense of a fallen spirit, a demon—troubled him. We certainly know that as love, patience, joy and peace are elements of the holy spirit—God's disposition—so a spirit of hatred and jealousy is an evil spirit or disposition "from God,"—that is, away from God, to the contrary of God. We may recognize the fact, too, that such an evil spirit as here took possession of Saul was not only a spirit far from God, or anything that he could approve, but we may even assume that, since Saul was God's anointed representative in the throne of Israel, the evil spirit could not have gained control over him without at least divine permission. As holy men of old were moved by the holy spirit to speak and write matters of divine inditement, so men have been moved and are sometimes moved today by evil spirits to speak and to write perverse things. This is the thought contained in the word "prophesied" in this verse. Saul spoke unwise things, improper things, spoke foolishly while he had his javelin in

his hand. The spirit of evil was upon him, leading him to make a motion with his javelin as though he would do violence to his faithful and humble young general who, as a friend and companion, played for him upon the harp with a view to dispelling his melancholy. The word "cast" (V. 11) is a stronger one than is borne out by the original, which seems simply signify a motion—although subsequently he did actually hurl the weapon.—1 Sam. 19:10.

David seems to have been quite intrepid, fearless, and again and again exposed himself to Saul's power when the latter was under the influence of his melancholia. There is no mention of David's fear, for although he felt it to be propriety and duty to escape as he did, he seems to have had continually the memory of God's power for his preservation, and the fact that God had already anointed him to be the king in due time. Such faith and courage points a good lesson to all the members of the antitypical David. Nothing shall by any means hurt us. Things may interfere with our fleshly interests or comfort or course of affairs; but when we remember that we are not in the flesh but in the spirit, that it is as new creatures that the Lord has promised us the kingdom in his due time, we can realize that no outside influence can interfere with our real interests, our spiritual interests, nor hinder our attaining to the glories of the kingdom which the Lord has promised to his faithful ones. Only our loss of confidence in the Lord and our unfaithfulness to him could separate us from his love and his promises. —Rom. 8:35-39.

Saul's jealousy of David was supported by his fear of him. Doubtless he wondered often that the fearless youth who attacked the lion should spare himself—even when he, Saul, had manifested openly his hatred and opposition toward him. He perceived that the Lord was with David and not with himself. David's presence became distasteful in the palace, and, as he could not be ignored, he was put into the army and various commissions given him in connection with the interests of the kingdom, Saul evidently hoping that through some indiscretion David would give an excuse for a turning of popular sentiment against him—perhaps hoping also that in some of the forays he would be wounded or killed. But the spirit of the Lord, as the Apostle explains, is the "spirit of a sound mind," and in proportion as David trusted the Lord and was guided by that trust he was enabled to do his part with wisdom, winning the approval of the people and all the more the fear and awe of Saul.

This lesson to some extent illustrates the relationship between the Lord's consecrated people and the world at the present time. The worldly are in power, in influence, and yet they are conscious of the fact that divine favor is no longer with them; that a change of dispensation is about to be determined in the divine program; that the Laodicean stage of the church is to cease to be the Lord's mouthpiece, and to be spewed out; that the faithful little flock—of whom not many are wise or great or noble according to the course of this world—are to inherit the kingdom with much power and glory. They do not indeed realize that the anointed class is in their midst and mingling with them day by day; nevertheless they feel a jealousy in respect to those who have more of the Lord's spirit than themselves, and hate that which is purer and higher and better than they themselves possess. At times their jealousy would almost lead to murder; but they fear and hate the David class because of their closer relationship to the Lord, and because of his blessing manifested in their hearts and lives. Our Lord referred to such a condition of things in the end of the Jewish age, which was certainly a type of the end of this age. He said of the religious people of that time: "The darkness hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest its deeds be reproved; but he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God." Thus as a separation was made between Saul and David, and between those who loved the darkness and those who loved the light at the Lord's first advent, so a separation is rapidly going on today between those who love the light, the truth, and who are guided by the holy spirit, and those who are of a different mind or disposition.

Our Golden Text should be borne in mind as a comforting and sustaining power to the Lord's faithful. It is in full harmony with the words of the Apostle in the New Testament who declares that "all things are working together for good to them who love God, who are the called according to his purpose."

A REMARKABLE FRIENDSHIP

1 SAMUEL 20:12-23.—AUGUST 23.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"*There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.*"—PROV. 18:24.

History relates many instances of intense friendships between great men in ancient times, but it tells us of none surpassing the friendship between Jonathan and David, referred to in this lesson. Jonathan's love for David, evidently thoroughly reciprocated by the latter, shines out not only as a friendship that was unselfish, but as one that was apparently injurious to Jonathan's interest—though not really so.

As the son of King Saul, Jonathan was the recognized heir to the throne of Israel, and was at this time about thirty-five years of age. David, the country youth of about twenty-one years of age, had suddenly sprung into prominence before the nation, had been appointed a captain of a thousand men, and was just recently married to Saul's daughter. Saul himself viewed David as a rival in the affections of the people, and everything foreboded that some day he would be Saul's successor. From the standpoint of fallen manhood, therefore, Jonathan had every reason to consider David an opponent and rival, and the envy and jealousy of the fallen nature might be expected to breed in Jonathan's heart hatred and enmity instead of friendship and love. These circumstances constitute the remarkable friendship between these two young men one of the most wonderful on the pages of history.

We read of how Jonathan's soul was knit unto the soul of David—their affections, confidences and loves were interwoven. Jonathan giving to David certain parts of his own apparel when the latter came to live at the court of Saul, was merely an outward manifestation of the other precious sentiments which prompted this and other manifestations of affection—all of which, dignifying David and promoting his honor, were derogatory to the natural interests of Jonathan, who, as the heir apparent, might not improperly have aspired to the maintenance of his own place of honor at the court. Small minds are apt to make the mistake of supposing that the crushing down of others is essential to their own honor and exaltation; but it was because Jonathan was not thus small-minded, but noble-hearted, that his character has been beloved by all who have known it from that time until now.

There is a reason for everything, and there must have been a reason for this love between these two noble souls. We are to love and esteem whatsoever things are just, true, pure, noble, honorable, says the Apostle, which implies that the love of the reverse of these would be improper. True, there is a difference between loving principles of righteousness and goodness and loving individuals, but what we wish to notice is that the love for individuals should be based upon their possession of noble and love-worthy characters. Neither of these men could have loved the other had he been bad, ignoble; for only the mean can love the mean, and only the perverse can love the perverse.

What was there in David's character that attracted Jonathan's love? Undoubtedly it was his nobility, his courage, his honesty, his faithfulness to the king and to the nation, and, above all, his trust in God, his reliance on him. What was there in Jonathan which drew forth the responsive love of David? There were many of the same qualities: Jonathan was also courageous and had already demonstrated this; he was sincere, honest, humble-minded, generous, faithful to a friend, and above all faithful to his God.—1 Sam. 14:1-15, 27-30, 43; 23:16-18.

While these two men had certain natural qualities of heart which commended each to the other's love, the great bond of union was the faith and devotion of each to God. Some one has said that those who would be the best friends need a third object in which both are interested, and that then, like the radii of a circle, the nearer they come to this center the nearer they approach to one another. So with these men: their loyalty to God and to the principles of truth and righteousness exemplified in God, was the strong bond of their friendship which hindered the diversity of their earthly interests from alienating their affections.

Ths same principle is exemplified in all true, unselfish love: there must be something mutually attractive to draw and to hold the interest and love of each to the other. The

breaking of vows of love and friendship or the breaking of marriage vows implies that one or other had a selfish love and not a pure love, which the Lord's Word inculcates and which is so nobly illustrated in this lesson. Selfish love may indeed admire that which is brilliant, that which is good, that which is noble, that which is generous; but not being equally noble and generous, it will be sure at some time to be assaulted with the temptation to abandon the friendship where it believes it could better serve its own interests. Jonathan's love was not of this selfish kind, consequently it was unchangeable —indeed, grew the firmer and the stronger in proportion as it triumphed over the propositions of any selfish suggestions. In this respect it well represents the love of our Lord Jesus for his people. As Jonathan loved David at the cost of his own position, our Lord Jesus left the glory which he had with the Father that he might become the Redeemer of his people, to whom he declares, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."

"One there is above all others
Well deserves the name of friend;
His is love beyond a brother's,
Costly, free, and knows no end."

Our lesson introduces these two friends at a time when the life of David was in danger. Our preceding lesson showed that Saul was disposed to do violence to David. The threatening action mentioned in that lesson was repeated several times, and finally the javelin was thrown at his musician David, but the latter escaped it. It was in view of this hostile feeling that these friends decided that it would be unwise for David to again appear at court unless King Saul manifested some change of mind toward him. The coming feast would be an important one; Jonathan and others of the household would be present, but it was not considered prudent that David should hazard his life by attending, and it was arranged that Jonathan should make his excuses to the king and should subsequently let David know the king's attitude of mind, so that if necessary he should flee out of the country. Jonathan found Saul full of bitterness of heart toward David, so much so that he was angered at his son for making excuses for him and threw his javelin at him as an evidence of his displeasure, though probably not with the intention of killing him. Jonathan resented the indignities and wrong of his father, and at once communicated the matter to David by the prearranged signal related in this lesson. However, the two friends could not part without a personal interview, in which they kissed each other, and wept, and bound each other in promises, and called upon God to witness the sincerity of their devotion to each other. Jonathan was evidently fully convinced that David was the Lord's choice for a king to succeed Saul, and, being full of faith and devotion to God, he had not the slightest thought of opposing the divine arrangement. Quite probably, too, in their confidences, David had already told Jonathan of his anointing, assuring him, however, that he would not consider this anointing a proper excuse or ground for any interference with King Saul; that on the contrary, as the Lord had sought him and anointed him, the Lord himself was able in his own due time and in his own way to install him in authority and power without his stretching forth his hand to do injury to one who already had been anointed of the Lord to this office of king.

We have already noticed that friendship implies like qualities of mind and of heart. The generous love the generous, the noble love the noble, the honest love the honest, the meek love the meek, etc.; but now we call attention to the fact that amongst the Lord's people are not many great, wise or noble—naturally speaking—and that God loves and accepts as his covenant people, friends, children, chiefly those who are not noble by nature. We notice also a love and friendship amongst the Lord's consecrated people stronger and deeper than any earthly tie or relationship—notwithstanding the fact that amongst the Lord's people are "not many great or noble," but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith. How comes this seeming contradiction of a general rule of friendship? We reply that God's love toward us as sinners was not that of friendship but of compassion, and similarly the love of his people for sinners is not that of friendship but of compassion, sympathy, the desire to help them out of their degradation. Not until after we had ceased to be sinners, through acceptance of Christ, were we privileged to become the friends of God and to realize him as our friend. Not until we had ceased to be sinners, and had been accepted in the Beloved, would we become the friends of others similarly transformed, and begin to grow in this quality of friendship—love for one another as brethren, partakers of the holy Spirit.

In a word there are two planes of friendship—a natural plane, on which men of like natural qualities would be drawn together; and a spiritual plane, on which those unlike in natural qualities, but alike in spiritual hopes, aims and ambitions, are drawn still more closely together by the new tie, the new love, which binds not their flesh but their hearts in Christian love and unity.

These new creatures in Christ Jesus know each other not according to the flesh but according to the spirit. In each other's spirits or new minds there are the noblest sentiments, the highest aspirations, that which is good, true, noble, pure—whatever may be their weaknesses according to the flesh. They love each other from the new standpoint of intention, will, harmony with God, and their friendship for one another grows increasingly as they perceive each other's energy in fighting the good fight of faith against the evil influences of the world, the flesh and the Adversary. Nor tongue nor pen can properly express the love, the friendship, which subsists between the new creatures in Christ Jesus, to whom old things have passed away and all things have become new.

This does not signify, however, that a parent must have exactly the same love for other children as for his own;—he has a greater responsibility for his own, and should realize it. Nor does it imply that even the saints will all be loved to the same degree. Our Lord, we are told, *specially* loved some of his disciples. By and by, when perfection shall have replaced imperfection, all "brethren" will be perfect and all neighbors will be brethren beloved. Until then, however, we must love all, but "making a difference"—according to natural obligations and spiritual development.—Jude 22.

As there are nominal Christians and real Christians, so there is a nominal love as well as a real love amongst those who profess the name of Christ, and it should be more and more the aim of the Lord's true people to cultivate his spirit, his character, his disposition, his love, his friendship; and that they may be able to cultivate these he has caused the Apostle to present to our attention a most graphic description of the love which is from above. This description is given in I Cor. 13. It must be enjoyed to some extent by all who are new creatures, for if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his; but it will be increasingly enjoyed and appreciatingly understood in proportion as the Lord's people each become stronger in the Lord—copies of God's dear Son —like him who is the friend above all others.

One writer says, "The glory of life is to love, not to be loved; to give, not to give; to serve, not to be served. . . . . The self-centered cannot keep friends even when he makes them."

Another remarks, "Behold, what gross errors and extreme absurdities many do commit for want of a friend to tell him of them."

"True criticism does not consist, as so many critics seem to think, in depreciating but in appreciation. More lives are spoiled by undue harshness than by undue gentleness."

"The centered love of any one person tends toward universal good-will, the love of all. The candle not only shines on him who lights it, but on all within reach of its rays."

"Every power for good in true friendship is a power for evil in the false."

"'Was it friend or foe that spread these lies!
Nay, who but infants question in such wise?
'Twas one of my most intimate enemies.'"

INTERESTING LETTER

MR. CHARLES T. RUSSELL:—

Dear Sir: I have had the pleasure of reading one of your books and have become very much interested in it. I am a young man who, having lost both father and mother at the age of 4, was sent to a Catholic institution in New York State. There I had the fear of hell so pounded into me that often I was afraid to go to bed for fear the devil would take me by the leg. That may sound simple, but it is a fact. After being there ten years, they gave me one dollar and sent me on to New York to make my living. I did not have a friend in the world and could not get work, so before I would starve I stole, and was sent to the penitentiary. When I came out I had no money and nowhere to go, so I went back to prison. That went on till at the age of 21 I landed in Sing Sing prison for five years. Now if I had had some one to tell me how Jesus loved me and would care for me, I would have been a different man; but my life has been blasted and today I am an inmate of an ex-convicts' home; but as I said in the beginning I have read one of your books and it has given me a clearer and a brighter view of God and a better hope in life.

I remain, your brother in Christ,

JAMES BURK, *Pennsylvania*

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

DEATH OF CHRIST A PUZZLE TO DR. MORGAN

The Rev. G. Campbell Morgan preached on the life of Christ to a large congregation at the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian church yesterday. "In the light of the revelation of the life of Christ, I come face to face with a great moral mystery," said Dr. Morgan. "There is some infinite meaning in the death of Jesus, and it is the stumbling block of my faith. At the cross of Christ I must be either an infidel or a believer. In the presence of the death of Christ I am compelled to deny the existence of a moral governor and admit his death a most terrible blunder or the presence of the most wonderful love that man has known. Notwithstanding the wonderful teachings of this man, God permitted him to die at the age of thirty-three. Humanly speaking, his work was undone—just commenced, as a matter of fact. Not a volume written, not a school founded, but just as he reached the commencement of his career he was foully murdered. I want an explanation of this. My mind demands it."—*Exchange.*

* * *

It is astounding that any man should consider himself competent to preach the Gospel who does not know why Christ died. It is still more astounding that a body of Christians should appoint, engage and salary, as their teacher, a man who gives us every reason for believing that he needs that some one teach him the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. We can only conclude that the people recognizing and employing such a teacher are similarly ignorant of Christian fundamentals.

To what advantage is it that thousands of church edifices are built every year, and that millions of money are spent on theological seminaries, and on salaries for preachers, organists and choristers, if this is the net result;—ignorance of the fundamentals.

Are such people. who know not why Christ died, to be considered Christians? Certainly not. It is not good clothes, nor Sunday observance, nor even good morals that constitute men and women Christians, but *faith*—faith in the very thing that these people confess that they know nothing about. A Buddhist or Mohammedan or Confucian may have, and some of them do have, everything that a Christian has except this one all-important essential to Christianity—faith that Christ died as man's sin-offering, as his *ransom-price,* in order that God might be just and yet be the justifier of sinners who believe in this sacrifice and by faith accept forgiveness of sins and become on this basis followers of Christ.

How plain the whole matter from the standpoint of the *ransom,* its necessity and results. How clearly we can see that all the sermons and books imaginable would have been of no avail until first of all the New Covenant had been sealed with the precious blood. Hearken to our Lord's words, "The Son of Man came . . . . to *give his life a ransom* for many." (Matt. 20:28) He came not to preach and write books. Others under divine power and inspiration could do and have done those things, but he alone had an unforfeited *life* "to give for the *life* of the world." As he said again, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that is written in the prophets: ought not Christ to suffer and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:25, 26) He did suffer death—"the just for the unjust"—and thus made atonement for our sins, paying the death penalty against us. He did enter into his glory and is fully prepared to give forth the vivifying blessing so much needed by the whole groaning creation.

Why then did he not at once—as soon as glorified—begin the kingdom work of rescuing Adam and his children from the grasp of sin and its penalty, death? Because in the divine plan it was arranged that first a church-bride should be selected as his companions in sufferings and future glories. Soon the testing of those called to this joint-heirship will be completed and then our prayer, "Thy kingdom come," will be answered, and the blessing of the world at the hands of the Good Physician and his bride will begin. The great uplift of that blessed Millennial day will be not merely physical but mental and moral—not partial and temporal, but to those who *will* to obey, it will be made complete and everlasting.

A NAVAL OFFICER ON PERSONAL RELIGION

Captain Mahan. of the U. S. Navy, evidently knows something else than naval warfare. He delivered an address worthy of being considered by a larger audience than heard it. He said:—

"In my judgment the church of today, laity and clergy, have made the capital mistake in generalship of reversing the two great commandments of the Law; the two fundamental principles of her war, established by Christ himself. Practically, as I observe, the laity hold, and the clergy teach, that the first and great commandment is 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' Incidentally thereto, it is admitted, 'Thou shouldst love the Lord thy God.' It is of course too egregious an absurdity to openly call that the second commandment. It is simply quietly relegated to a secondary place.

"You may perhaps dispute this deduction as a matter of fact or remind me of St. John's words, 'He who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, can not love God whom he hath not seen.' It is evident, however, on reflection that St. John is in no sense inverting our Lord's order. He simply appeals to evidence. This man says he loves God. Very well, where is the proof of it? Does he love his brother? If not, he certainly does not love God, for the love of the brethren is the sure, inevitable fruit of loving God. In fact the whole missionary spirit, and much that is not narrowly missionary, involves love for brethren whom we have no more seen than we have seen God. The love of God is the one sure motive and source of the love for man."

Is it not true, Captain Mahan inquires, that within the last thirty years the church has been teaching that "a man's personal piety is of small consequence alongside of his external benevolent activities"? Has not the church come to stand for the idea that "external activities, outward benevolent, are not merely the fruit of Christian life, but the Christian life itself"? He continued:

"Is not the judgment of the world expressed, and is it not a true judgment, in the words of indifferent contempt for a man who is trying to save his own soul—his miserable soul, as I have sometimes read? And yet what is a man's soul? It is the one thing inexpressibly dear to God, for which, if there had been but one, he was content to give his Son, and this he has intrusted to man as his own particular charge. I do not say his only charge, but the one clearly and solely committed to him to make the most of. It is the talent which he is to multiply by diligent care; not that he may delight in it himself, but that he may present it to God through Jesus Christ. . . . . Because care of one's own soul, by internal effort and discipline, seemed selfish, men have rushed to the extreme of finding in external action, in organized benevolence, in philanthropic effort, in the love of the neighbor, and particularly of the neighbor's body, for the neighbor's soul was naturally of not more account than one's own—not merely the fruit of Christian life, but the Christian life itself. That the kingdom of God is within you, an individual matter primarily and in essence, and only in consequence, and incidentally external, as all activity is but a manifestation of life and not life itself—all this was forgotten. This I conceive to be the state of the church now, I mean as an organization; for I doubt not the multitudes of earnest cultivators of their own souls for the glory of God—perfecting holiness, as St. Paul says, in the fear of the Lord."

There is but one remedy, declares the Captain and that is the restoration of "personal religion"—"the direct relation of the individual soul to God—to that primary place in the Christian scheme which it has momentarily lost." In conclusion he said:

"Within this generation there has been given much vogue to a secular phrase, the prevalence of which seems so indicative of the temper of the day as to point just where the sagacious Christian warrior, crafty as St. Paul was to seize opportunity and capture men with guile for Jesus Christ, may lay hold upon men's hearts and minds. Self-culture—we have all heard much of it; sweetness and light, and all the rest of it. No new thing. The Stoics cultivated themselves, their personality, that they might reach self-sufficingness, which, being attained, could be presented to themselves in the form of self-contentment. Let this human conception receive consecration. What is self-culture, but deliverance from evil unto good—salvation from sin? And who shall thus save his people? Who but Jesus Christ? And what is personal religion but the coöperation of man's will with the power of Jesus Christ, that man's soul, man's whole being, may be saved; not for his own profit chiefly, but that he may lay it, thus redeemed, thus exalted, at the feet of him who loved him and gave himself for him."

* * *

The "salvation" of the philosopher is the growing one today, everywhere; because faith in the Bible is giving way to Higher Criticism and Evolutionism, which are mere human philosophies. A living faith must have a foundation in the divine revelation, the Bible. It alone shows what righteousness is and that "there is none righteous, no not one." It

alone shows how sin came into the world (Rom. 5:12) and that personal *faith* in a personal Savior is the only ground for hope of a personal salvation.

"Truth people," as well as others, need to be on guard on this subject. Some of them seem to get the false impression that head-knowledge is the basis of brotherhood. While encouraging Bible study and growth in knowledge we must still recognize heart-salvation as the aim and object of all our proclamations of the Gospel. Knowledge is merely the lamp which guides the way toward heart-salvation,—"sanctification of the spirit [mind] through the belief of the truth."—1 Pet. 1:3-6.

With some, the thought that "our salvation is to be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Savior" at his second advent seems to mean that it would be a mistake to speak *also* of a present heart-salvation translating us, even now out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. We may be sure that none will attain the "great salvation" promised to the elect who does not in the present time experience heart-regeneration or salvation from the love of sin.

OUR MEMORIAL NUMBER

Our subscribers have recently received Vol. I of the MILLENNIAL DAWN series as a number of this journal. This cheap edition we are supplying at 5c per copy postpaid to any address you please in the United States and Canada, or 9c per copy to any foreign address, except Canada. Confident that our readers will want to send these out to their friends in large quantities, we have given an order for 300,000 copies, and of these we have already received 100,000. Thus you see we are prepared for your orders and ready to execute them promptly—20 copies for $1, or more or less at the same rate.

The experience of our readers we are sure agrees with our own, viz.. that tracts and sample TOWERS and conversations and sermons are valuable in spreading the present truth only in proportion as they lead up to a study of the DAWNS. Whoever will not give time and attention to a careful reading of the DAWN, will apparently never become thoroughly rooted and grounded in present truth. And those who are most clear in the truth have re-read the books several times. These books stand re-reading, because they are practically the Bible put in another form—Bible topics treated systematically,—the testimony of the various prophets and apostles, etc., being gathered together and arranged under the various appropriate heads. We could wish that our readers would all begin afresh the study of these volumes. It is noted sometimes how rapidly beginners now make progress, and occasionally seem to outstrip others who have been much longer in the way. The reason generally is that they have studied the DAWNS *more recently*, and therefore have the various features more distinctly before the mind, with their strong interlocking and corroborative testimonies.

Our readers are aware from the annual reports that large numbers of DAWNS are continually going out, but very few, perhaps, are aware that the first volume has passed the one million (1,000,000) point, and is rushing along more rapidly than ever before. The new WATCH TOWER edition at 5c per copy may be considered a memorial of the one million copies already in circulation. The Lord's hand seems very markedly manifest in connection with this great sale; for booksellers, under the influence of denominational prejudice, will not handle the DAWNS. The Lord seems to intend that it shall be circulated only by those who are consecrated to him and his service; and he is raising up evangelists—colporteurs—who are carrying this message of the divine plan of the ages to all parts of the world. We are continually finding, too, that some of these have borne fruit without our knowledge—some coming into the light of present truth without learning of the WATCH TOWER and getting into our list. We trust that all of the dear brethren and sisters who love to serve the truth will be more and more on the alert to introduce the WATCH TOWER to all of the consecrated, who have a deep interest in the things of the kingdom. We want their names on the list, and that they should have the regular visits of the TOWER, whether they can afford to pay for it or not. We have a fund for the very purpose of paying the subscriptions of those who cannot afford to pay.

We cannot say that all who purchase the DAWNS are deeply interested in them. Quite the contrary. Some are prejudiced by misrepresentations so that they will not read, even after having purchased them. However, we do find indications which lead us to believe that, when the great time of trouble shall be upon the world, many of the sincere-hearted who now are prejudiced by misrepresentations will look up these books and study them earnestly, and receive both comfort and profit from them under the trying conditions in which they will then be placed.

When we inform you that over 14,000 DAWNS (quite apart from the new cheap edition) went out during June, as many more during July, and that the August output bids fair to be still larger, you will get an idea of the growing magnitude of the harvest work. It keeps us busy urging our printers and binders up to the notch, thus to keep the colporteurs in every quarter properly supplied; and all hands connected with the service here are endeavoring to do with their might for the service of the Lord and his cause. The WATCH TOWER office force consists of twenty-five persons engaged in various parts of the service, yet we do not do any printing or binding of our own. Five printing establishments are turning out papers, books and tracts, so that the total number employed in the work, directly and indirectly, must be very considerable.

Incidentally, we note that the volunteer work, this year, is progressing remarkably. The two million volunteer tracts prepared in the Spring are practically all in circulation, and another million is ready for delivery now. These are aside from our ordinary tracts, which are going out freely also. Order all you can use judiciously.

Pray for the divine blessing upon our service, and join to the extent of your ability in the reaping work of this time, and thus add to your joy, both now and everlastingly.

FOLLOWERS OF JESUS: CROSS-BEARERS

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."—Matt. 16:24.

Our Lord's invitation to forsake all and follow him is presented in very different language from the usual invitations given in his name today;—the thought, the sentiment, is wholly different. The general thougnt today, in connection with an invitation to "Come to Jesus," might be expressed thus:—"We invite, we urge upon you to escape an eternity of torture, of misery, by accepting Jesus as your Savior. It is a question of eternal happiness or eternal misery, and therefore, you have practically no alternative, but must accept him." How different from this is our Lord's presentation of the matter in this text. He says nothing whatever about there being no choice, nor about an eternity of misery for those who do not elect to become his followers. His words imply that it is a matter of choice with the individual, and not a matter of compulsion in any sense of the word.

Our text contains no urging, no insistence that there is no alternative. On the contrary it presents to the mind obstacles which must be encountered by those who become the Lord's followers—the crosses they must expect; and thus it invites them to consider well what they are doing, before taking the step. The invitation contains neither rant nor cant, but is, in every sense of the word, logical and reasonable, and so stated as to avoid any misunderstanding. In this respect it corresponds with our Lord's other utterances on the subject; as, for instance, when he gave the parable of the man who proposed to build a house and laid the foundation, but afterwards was not able to complete the structure. On this parable the Lord builds the teaching that his followers should count the cost of discipleship, in the same cool, methodical, calculating manner in which they would count the cost of the erection of a building; and that they should make sure that they sufficiently desire the result to carry forward the conditions necessary to attain them. His words are, "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple." He explains, further, that this implies that he will love the Lord more than father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters—yea, more than his own life.—Luke 14:26-30.

Furthermore, it is proper that we notice the class of people to whom the Lord addresses these searching requirements of discipleship. He addressed not vile sinners, not aliens, strangers, foreigners from God's covenants and blessings; but those who were already the recipients of these—Israelites. Our text shows that his invitation was addressed to those who were already, in some sense of the word at least, our Lord's "disciples"—believers in him and, to some extent, al-

ready coöperating with him. And so, still, we understand these words to be applicable, not to sinners but to those who have accepted of God's grace in Christ to the forgiveness of their sins. The Lord is seeking a very special class of followers, separate not only from the world in general, but separate and distinct from the ordinary class of followers or disciples. Without prejudice to the general interests of the world, the blessing of which will come in due time;—without prejudice to the general disciple or believer, who will experience some blessing, some favors more than the world;—our text is pointing out the conditions of that highest degree of discipleship, the reward of which will be to be with the Master, see him as he is and share his glory as joint-heir with him in the kingdom which the Father has promised him—through the instrumentality of which kingdom all the ordinary disciples and the world in general shall be eventually blessed.

Our Lord wished, evidently, to draw a sharp line of distinction between all other classes and those followers who would walk in his steps, bearing their crosses after him. It is of this class that he declares, "No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62) This special class must be thoroughly imbued with a zeal for God and for righteousness; must gain some reasonable conceptions of the good things which God has in reservation for them; must have some appreciation of the kingdom privileges, else they will not be persevering enough, nor zealous enough, to "fight the good fight of faith" and overcome the spirit of the world, with the Lord's assisting grace. It will require these qualities of heart, in addition to the grace, mercy and strength which the Lord has promised to enable them to take up their cross and follow the Lord in the narrow way of self-sacrifice. And it was not only a kindness on the Lord's part to make clear and definite the terms of the sacrifice, but it was reasonable also that he should not inveigle any into taking such a course contrary to the true zeal of their hearts. It was eminently proper that he should put the matter just as he did put it, and that we, as his followers and mouthpieces, should present the matter to each other and to all who purpose to become his disciples in the same straightforward manner.

Some might be inclined to think that urging to accept the Lord and to seek to be his follower, with the thought that any other course would mean eternal torture, might be considered a deception which would work out benefit to the deceived ones—a deception which would do good rather than harm. We dispute this. We hold, on the contrary, that the erroneous teaching has done great injury in various ways.

(1) Its misrepresentation of the divine methods and arrangements has caused many to doubt not only the love but the justice of God.

(2) While people have theoretically claimed that only those who follow closely in the footsteps of Jesus and take up their crosses, following him in self-sacrifice, will be saved, and all the remainder of mankind be damned to eternal torture, nevertheless few believe it, few act upon such a belief, few are making an effort to be followers of the Lord as if they believed it: and extremely few of the many who are not trying to take up their crosses and follow the Lord give evidence of any fear of an eternity of torment because of neglecting his words.

(3) As a consequence there is a nominal church of professed followers of Christ, extremely few of whom are followers in the sense comprehended by the Lord in the text.

(4) As a result of this, nominal Christianity and nominal discipleship having crowded out the true condition of discipleship which our Lord specified as necessary to joint-heirship in the kingdom, we find that nearly all the preaching and other religious efforts and services of today are going in another direction entirely—to produce merely justified believers, and not to produce the sanctified followers described.

(5) As a consequence, present conditions, teachings, etc., are extremely unfavorable to the development of the very class which this Gospel age was intended to select and perfect as joint-heirs with their Lord in the kingdom.

It is because, under the Lord's providences, the mists of the dark ages are scattering and the light of the Millennial morning creeping in, that we are privileged to see the inconsistencies and falsities of the traditions of men which have beclouded the inspired records; and therefore, we are led to inquire for the "old paths," and to listen, not for the confused babel of error, but for the clear words of the great Shepherd of the flock and his inspired representatives, the apostles. Listening to these—listening to the voice of God through these—the inspired plan of God is becoming clear and luminous to us, and its every feature reasonable, harmonious and beautiful.

It is from this standpoint that we are enabled to view our text with pleasure; and seeing the grand designs of our Almighty Father, are enabled to rejoice that we are accounted worthy, through our Redeemer's merit, to be invited to walk in his footsteps and to take up our crosses and to follow him through evil and through good report. And we are assured of his sustaining grace by the way, and of final victory and joint-heirship with him in the kingdom, if we thus continue steadfast to the end.

"If any man will come after me," signifies, If any man desires to be a follower of mine, to walk in my steps of obedience to the Father's will, and to share with me in the Father's reward. Such are to know that the cost of such discipleship will be cross-bearing. Cross-bearing signifies endurance of trials, difficulties, disappointments—the crossing of the human will and preferences by circumstances and conditions permitted of the Father. Our Lord's will was fully submitted to God, so that it was his delight to do the Father's will, and this must be our attitude to commence with; but after this consecration has taken place comes the trial and testing. If we were in heaven, where all is in full accord with the divine will, we could have no crosses from the time we fully consecrated to the Lord; because our wills being in accord with the Father's will and with all righteousness, and there being nothing in heaven contrary to that which is right, we would be in accord with everything, and everything would be in accord with our newly consecrated minds. Our crosses come because we are living in "this present evil world," because the spirit of the world is contrary to the Lord and his spirit of righteousness and equity, and because our adversary, Satan seeketh continually to stumble and ensnare us; because, also, our new wills are circumscribed and hindered and opposed by the desires of our natural bodies, which are more or less in accord with the things of this present time, its conditions, its aims, its sentiments; and because the new will strives to use the body in a manner and in a service which, under present evil conditions, continually causes it annoyance and suffering. These things are to be taken into consideration as the cost of discipleship—the cost of a share in the kingdom and its glory, honor and immortality, promised to the "called, chosen and faithful."

"GOD KINDLY VEILS OUR EYES"

It is fortunate for us that in the outstart we do not, can not, estimate or appreciate the full meaning of the words, sacrifice, cross-bearing, etc. If we could look into the future and see from the start the various trials and difficulties to be encountered in the "narrow way," doubtless few of us would have the courage to make the consecration and the start—if we could not see or appreciate, beforehand, the rewards and blessings which under divine providence come to us in connection with every trial—more than compensating us for every earthly self-denial and endurance. Nor can we in advance appreciate how the Lord wishes to test our zeal and our faith, by letting us come to the crosses of life one at a time, and letting us see their ruggedness,—hiding from us the assisting hand by which, as soon as we take hold of the cross and put forth our efforts, our Lord lifts the real weight of it, so that we have no more at any time than we are able to bear. So careful is he of all those who thus become his footstep followers and cross-bearers, and prospectively his joint-heirs in the kingdom, that he will not "suffer them to be tempted above that they are able, but with the temptation will provide also a way of escape."—1 Cor. 10:13.

SACRIFICING PRECEDES CROSS-BEARING

The first step in following the Lord is properly designated in the Scriptures a sacrifice; but it is not a taking up of the cross. When we sacrifice our wills, when we submit ourselves fully to the Lord, it is the sum of all sacrifice—in the sense that the giving up of the will means the surrender of our all to the Lord, that his will may be done in respect to all our affairs. The will is the individual, the ego, and holds the command, the rulership of our time, influence, abilities, and every talent; hence the surrender of the will to God means a surrender of all these things to him. All subsequent sacrifices which we may make in the Lord's service are included in and represented by this sacrifice of the will. If the will changes, draws back, ceases to be obedient to God, ceases to be submissive to his arrangements, the whole condition changes and the relationship to God as a member of the body of Christ terminates. But if the will continues faithful to God and desirous of serving him and his cause, though the service and cross-bearing be not done faithfully, the Lord will carry such through, and by chastisements and corrections in righteousness

they shall ultimately be "saved so as by fire"—by tribulation. This is the essence of the doctrine of "the final perseverance of the saints." So long as they continue to be consecrated—to have their wills sanctified to the Lord—they continue to be his, even should they, from lack of zeal, fail to win the prize offered to the zealous, the "overcomers."

But if the will remain loyal to the Lord, and the crosses are approached and lifted and borne in faith and trust, not only will the Lord's grace suffice, but his comfort and assistance will be given in the narrow way;—so that its trials and difficulties may be esteemed as "light afflictions, but for a moment." Eventually this class shall be the victors, joint-heirs with the Master in his kingdom, because by his assisting grace they shall have walked in his footsteps faithfully, even unto death—and that with greater ease and peace and joy and satisfaction than others who with less zeal seek to avoid the crosses of their consecration.

The statement that the consecration of the will—its surrender, its sacrifice, that the Lord's' will may be received instead—is not one of the crosses we are called on to bear, may need further explanation. In order for the sacrifice of our wills to be acceptable to the Lord at all, it must be no cross to us: the desire to give up our own will and to accept God's will must be a joy, a pleasure. Our wills must be sacrificed willingly, else the sacrifice will not be accepted of the Lord, and we shall have neither part nor lot with him. Unless the will be joyfully resigned to the Lord's will, all subsequent sacrificing or cross-bearing will count nothing whatever to our advantage. Our Master's expression respecting the surrender, the sacrifice, of his will to do the Father's will, illustrates this matter clearly; and it will be noticed from the language that there was no cross connected therewith.

Our Lord's sentiments were, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." (Psa. 40:8) And so all who would be his disciples must not only count the cost of cross-bearing because of the opposition of the world, the flesh and the devil, but they must have a somewhat similar spirit to that of our Lord in connection with the sacrificing of their wills; they, too, must delight to have God's will done in them—delight to surrender or sacrifice their own wills. Let us see this clearly, and if there is anything lacking in respect to the sacrifice of our wills let us give it our first attention. He who has completely sacrificed his will to the Lord's will has gained the victory at the start which will make all the remainder of the "narrow way" comparatively easy. He who has merely hacked and mutilated his will instead of killing it outright, will find extra difficulty at every step of his journey ,and can never gain the victory until he has finished the sacrifice which he imperfectly began.

IN WHAT DOES CROSS-BEARING CONSIST?

The Master's cross-bearing did not consist in fighting the weaknesses of the flesh, for he had none; nor are these weaknesses of the flesh our crosses. Because all our weaknesses of the flesh are fully covered by the merit of our Lord's sacrifice; our standing before God is as new creatures and not as imperfect fleshly creatures — the imperfections of the flesh, which are contrary to our wills and opposed by them, being fully pardoned by the Lord. The Lord's cross-bearing consisted in the *doing of the Father's will under unfavorable conditions.* This course brought upon him the envy, hatred, malice, strife, persecution, etc., of those who thought themselves to be God's people but whom our Lord, who read their hearts, declared to be of their father, the devil. We are not able to read the hearts of those about us who profess to be the Lord's people, yet we may be sure that there are plenty still who profess the name of God and of Christ and who have none of his spirit and are not his children, but are the children of the adversary,—begotten of an evil spirit.

Since we are walking in the same "narrow way" that our Master walked, we may reasonably expect that our crosses will be of similar kind to his—oppositions to our doing the will of our Father in heaven—oppositions to our serving his cause and letting the light shine out as our Master and Leader directed. It is a pleasure for us to do the Father's will—no cross about that. We delight not only to consecrate our wills, but the Lord's law of righteousness is in our hearts to such an extent that we delight to serve the right, the truth. Our cross-bearing comes when we find that the truth, so beautiful to us, so charming, is hated by others and draws upon us their anger, malice, hatred, as the same truths drew the same opposition upon our Master. Our faithfulness in cross-bearing consists in our willingness to stand up for the truth and for every principle of righteousness:—meekly, humbly, yet firmly, speaking the truth in love, no matter what the cost of friendships broken or enmities enkindled, or evil words spoken against us falsely for the truth's sake.

Our Master forewarned us of just such experiences when he spoke of our crosses in following him. He was explaining the matter more fully when he said, "Marvel not if the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." "If ye were of the world the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." If they have called the Master of the house Beëlzebub,—prince of devils,—think it not strange if they will call his followers by evil names also. Yea, he forewarned us, "They shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake." He even implied that some who are not children of the devil would be found amongst the persecutors of the cross-bearers, and assured us that some of these would verily think that they were doing God service. And are they not doing God and us also a service in the sense that Satan is serving God's purposes in the present time, in the persecution of the church;—in making her path a "narrow" one, and filling it with difficulties; that thus the Lord's faithful cross-bearers might be tested and proven, and that he might thus select and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works and zealous of the truth?

CROSS-BEARERS MUST BATTLE WITH THE FLESH, ALSO

While we pointed out, foregoing, that cross-bearing is quite separate from battling with the weaknesses of the flesh, nevertheless whoever has the mind of Christ, whoever is seeking to be a cross-bearer and to stand up as a respresentative of the Lord and the truth in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation, as an ambassador of God, will surely realize that he could not be an acceptable ambassador and could not claim that his will is sacrificed to the Lord's will, if he did not strive against the weaknesses and imperfections in himself as well as stand for the general principles of righteousness and truth everywhere. The Apostle included this thought and much more in this expression,—"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." (1 John 2:6) He is to walk as our Lord walked, in his general deportment and relationship to everything that is good; and correspondingly to avoid everything that is evil. He is to walk as nearly as possible in the footsteps of Jesus.

This, however, does not mean that he either should or could, in an imperfect body, walk up to all the perfection of his Lord, who even in the flesh was perfect. It means just what it says, that we should walk as he walked—in the same way, in the same direction, toward the same mark and standard that he recognized and established. The Apostle Paul gives us a suggestion along this line, very helpful when rightly understood. His words are, "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:4) To walk after the flesh is to walk after sin—to knowingly, willingly, intentionally, do those things which we recognize to be contrary to the divine will, even though we should not go to the extreme of wickedness. So, likewise, to walk after the spirit does not mean to walk *up to the standard* of the spirit, which would be impossible for us who were born in sin, shapen in iniquity, and thus blemished by sin according to the flesh. As "new creatures" we are living in the earthly tabernacle, which is imperfect; and so long as we are thus limited, we cannot do all that we would. As "new creatures," begotten of the holy spirit, we desire to do perfectly. We desire that every thought, word and act should be perfect in the sight of our heavenly Father, —as perfect as were those of our dear Redeemer; but this we know from the Scriptures and from experience is impossible. We are glad, therefore, that the Lord shows us, as in this statement of the Apostle, that what he requires is that we should walk after the spirit;—that he does not require of us that we should walk up to it, which would be an impossibility.

It is because we could not walk up to the spirit, up to the perfect standard of the divine requirement, that God has mercifully provided an arrangement of *grace* on our behalf, By this grace, those who start as members of the body of Christ, to walk in the footsteps of Jesus—to walk henceforth *not after the flesh,* but on the contrary to walk *after the spirit,* and as nearly as possible up to the spirit's requirements—have their deficiencies made up for them by their Redeemer's meritorious sacrifice. The divine arrangement for this is a unique one, which adapts itself to the various conditions and circumstances of each and all called to walk in this narrow way. If one by reason of being well born and having a good environment has for this reason a better balanced and equipped mortal body in which the new mind can exercise itself with the greater freedom;—and if such a one by reason of these advantages be able to walk nearer to the spirit's standard than a less favored brother, whose will, however, is equally

loyal to the Lord, the divine arrangement is that each shall have imputed to him *grace sufficient*,—so that both may be counted perfect—counted as having walked up to the spirit's requirements.

This matter may be more clearly before our minds if we imagine a scale marked off from naught (0) to one hundred (100)—a scale on which we will suppose mortal stamina to be measurable, one hundred representing the full, complete character which God requires. On this scale imagine five brethren with different degrees of physical imperfections, yet all fully consecrated to the Lord, all seeking to the best of their ability to "walk not after the flesh but after the spirit" —as nearly up to the full (one hundred) standard as possible. One has ten points of character, another twenty, another thirty, another forty, another fifty. From the Lord's standpoint, because they are all trusting in Christ and walking in his way, and seeking to do his will, they are all counted as up to the full standard, one hundred—all acceptable with the Lord—the weakest as well as the strongest of them. This wonderful divine arrangement for man's necessities tells of the wisdom of God as well as of his mercy and love. Who else could have devised such an equitable plan, by which whosoever cometh unto the Father through the Redeemer, with full consecration of heart, of will, and full intention of life, might be acceptable—nothing short of perfection being acceptable?

It is for this reason that we are told that we are reckonedly justified—"justified by faith." Mark now the words of the Apostle, "Where sin abounded, there did grace so much more abound." He here expresses a general principle of the divine arrangement. Those hearing the invitation in this present time, and desiring to accept God's grace and call, are all thus put on an equality: he who has little character with many weaknesses and imperfections, has accredited to him of the Lord's grace and merit proportionately; he who has more of character naturally and who needs, therefore, less of grace, gets also according to his needs. But let it be clearly noted that there is "none righteous, no, not one"—none who can come up to the divine standard. All need to have the Lord's merit imputed to them, and hence the Lord makes this arrangement for all who would approach him and accept his favor, his call to joint-heirship with his Son. They can have neither part nor lot in the matter until they have acknowledged their own imperfections and have accepted the imputed merits of our Redeemer, "In whom we have redemption through his blood."

All of the Lord's people—not all of the nominal church, not merely nominal disciples, but the true followers mentioned in the text—are not only walking in the same pathway, but similarly all find it narrow and difficult. Similarly all in this pathway have the same spirit, mind or disposition—to do the Father's will and to serve his cause. This is the spirit of Christ, and by it all men may take knowledge of his disciples; they, like him, will be loyal to the principles of righteousness and truth. They will be willing to suffer opposition and persecution for the Truth's sake for righteousness' sake, and thus with him to be cross-bearers.

The Apostle Paul brings out this thought when, writing to the Corinthians respecting Titus, he asks, "Walked we not in the same spirit? Walked we not in the same steps?" (2 Cor. 12.:18) Assuredly Paul and Titus must have been walking in the same spirit and the same steps if they were both walking in the spirit and steps of the Master,—taking up life's crosses and following him. And this, dear brethren and sisters, will be true of each and all of us. While we each have our individual peculiarities and differences of temperament, conditions, surroundings, opportunities, etc., the same spirit and the same steps can be noted in all who are followers of the Lamb. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." If any man walk not in the footsteps of Jesus he is not one of his followers, in this special sense pointed out by our text, and consequently would not be one of the joint-heirs in the kingdom. But let us keep in memory the Lord's assurance that his grace is sufficient for us, and that his strength is made perfect in our weakness, and that this is the victory that overcometh the world—even our faith.

OVERCOMING EVIL WITH GOOD

1 SAM. 26:5-12, 21-25.—AUGUST 30.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"*Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you.*"

This lesson concerns the seven years of David's experiences as a fugitive from the envy and hatred of King Saul. The latter, though still the nominal representative of the Lord upon the throne of Israel, had lost the divine blessing and power which, in considerable measure, had been transferred to David after his anointing to be Saul's successor. The lesson brings before our minds in sharp contrast the king, whose better judgment was overcome by evil impulses, and David, the "man after God's own heart," who, although far from perfect, strove successfully for mastery over himself, and overcame promptings of evil under the guidance of principles of righteousness. We are not to think of David as perfect. Neither are we to be blind to his faults and sins, nor to excuse them nor to copy them. David was not one of the "saints" in the New Testament sense. He lived at too early a date to share in the high calling, nor could he follow in the footsteps of Jesus, since the captain of our salvation and our forerunner in the narrow way had not yet come. David was a man after God's own heart, in the sense that he was full of faith in God and aimed aright. At heart he desired to do the Lord's will, and wherever he failed of this it caused him grief and led him to repentance. He lived before the time of God's revelation of his own character and plan and perfect will concerning his people. All things considered, David's attainments in faith and obedience were quite remarkable, so that although as a whole he was not to be considered as a model or pattern by the church of the Gospel age, nevertheless many beautiful illustrations of proper faith and obedience may be drawn from his career, and some of them are noted in the lesson before us.

The seven years from the time David fled from the wrath of Saul until Saul died must have seemed to David a peculiarly long period of trial of faith and patience. His own course had been a noble and true one. He had served his king and his nation most loyally, yet he suffered as a reward. He was for a time an exile in a foreign land, and his father's family was obliged to remove to Moab for protection. It must have seemed peculiar to David that the Lord should permit him, anointed to succeed King Saul, to be thus delayed from coming into his kingdom, and instead to be hunted and persecuted as an outlaw. This, however, was a valuable test of his faith, and doubtless helped to strengthen its roots, and thus to make his character stronger and his trust in the Lord firmer. But besides this, we may readily see that those seven years were valuable to David as a preparation for his kingly office. They made him intimately acquainted with the people and their usual manner of life and general sentiments—acquainted also with the neighboring peoples. Above all, he became intimately acquainted with the Lord, and, we may be sure, learned to trust his providences even where he could not trace them. Several of the Psalms were either written during this period and describe David's experiences on the spot, or written subsequently describing the lessons learned from those experiences. Amongst these Psalms may be mentioned numbers 34, 52, 56, 57, 63.

Spiritual Israelites who have already received the adoption and anointing of the Lord to future service as kings and priests, who shall reign on the earth with our blessed Lord and Head, to bless all the families of the earth, can easily trace valuable lessons in the trying experiences of David at the time of this lesson. The prince of this world is our enemy, not because we have done evil, but because he realizes that he has but a short time, and because he has a spirit that is opposed to the Lord's spirit in us. We too, at times, may wonder why the Lord—having anointed us and assured us of the glory, honor and immortality in the kingdom—permits us to have such trying experiences and such severe conflicts with the world, the flesh and the devil. The reason becomes evident as we learn the way of the Lord more particularly—as we learn that the present "afflictions which are but for a moment [comparatively] are working out for us [fitting us for] a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." We have need of patience, and that can only be gained by trials. We have need of faith, and that can only be developed by necessities. We have need of experience for our future work, which can be gained only by such experiences, which permit us to be touched with a feeling of the infirmities and difficulties and trials of those about us, to whom we shall be ministers and representatives when we reach the throne. For us, then, as for David, the lesson of present experiences is to resist evil,—and not with evil but with good.

In considering the story of David and other Bible heroes we are impressed with the candor of the narratives—that the evil things of their conduct are told with the same frankness as their good deeds. This is one of the peculiarities of the

Bible and one of the internal evidences of its truthfulness. How easy it would have been to have glossed the history of David so as to have avoided everything that would be to his discredit; and how surely this would have been done, especially in the case of a king, had the preparation of the Bible not been under divine supervision. Some, we are sure, incline to the thought that the Bible would have been much better reading had some of the faults of its prominent persons been omitted; we, however, are not sure of this. The story of the trials and failures and repentances of some of these noble characters have been no less blessings than the records of their noble deeds and sentiments. As some of the Lord's people have realized their own weaknesses in the flesh, having at times come short of their ideals in the battle against sin, they have found encouragement in the experiences of others related in the Scriptures—not to delve further into sin but to realize that "there is forgiveness with the Lord that he might be feared." As such have noted the failures of David on various occasions and his repentance, contrition and restoration to the Lord's favor, it has given them courage to similarly repent and to similarly trust in God's mercy and in their own forgiveness, and similarly to be encouraged to arise from their dejection and sin and start afresh in the battle for righteousness, truth, purity, etc.

Our lesson deals with one of David's experiences when pursued by Saul. The erratic course of King Saul under the control of an evil spirit doubtless led him to deal unjustly with other men, as he did with David.—with some for one cause, with some for another. Such people as incurred Saul's enmity, and those that were forced to become fugitives and to be ranked with outlaws, sought out David and put themselves under his superior control. These numbered at one time 400 and later on 600. (1 Sam. 22:2; 25:13; 27:2) These men, hindered from engaging in the ordinary pursuits of life by reason of the king's erratic curse, moved about from place to place, and, since they must eat, their presence was doubtless an affliction upon the farmers wherever they went. Their foragings may have been carried on in harmony with the Jewish law, which provided that any hungry persons might enter any farm, orchard or vineyard and eat to his satisfaction without molestation.

Doubtless it was because the people of the village of Ziph desired to curry the king's favor, and also because they feared the foragings of so many men, that they sent word to King Saul that David and his company could be found in their vicinity. The king hurriedly gathered a troop of 3,000 and went to the place, probably anxious to capture David and his followers. The latter, however, were not so easily caught; indeed they were much better used to scouting than the regular army would be. They readily ascertained all about the king and his army, while the king knew little or nothing of them.

The story shows how David with one trusty companion went into Saul's camp. King Saul and the whole army were sleeping without tents, clothed in their outer robes, as is frequently the custom in Palestine even yet. The king lay not in a "trench" but in a space or corral formed by the army wagons; and at his head, to distinguish him from the rest of the army, his spear was erected near his head-rest, as is still the custom among the chiefs of the Bedouins of that country. Secure in the thought that David and his handful of followers would be afraid of the king and his army and would not think of coming nigh them, no provision had been made for pickets or watchmen, so that David and his companion readily found the king, and could have murdered him in his sleep and escaped without detection had they chosen so to do. It was not that David was so obtuse that he could not see the advantage that would come to him that he refrained from killing the king, but because of his respect for God and his loyalty to him. David recognized fully that God was the King of Israel, and that God had *set* Saul in the position he occupied and anointed him as king; and that it was the duty of the people to honor the king as God's representative. (Kings among the Gentiles are not thus divinely *set.*) He did not have so weak a conscience as would have permitted him to reason that as God had anointed him to be Saul's successor he had now providentially put Saul's life in his power. On the contrary he reasoned properly that God was still King and that he had all the power necessary to dethrone Saul and to bring him to the throne in his own way; and that the Almighty needed not the assistance of murder on his part for the accomplishment of his plan.

To make the test still stronger David's companion suggested all this, and proposed to carry it out; so that the entire matter might have been done without David saying a word or lifting a finger. To a weaker mind this would have been an extremely strong temptation—he would have argued with himself that the crime would not be his,—that by merely keeping silent and refusing to interfere the whole matter might be accomplished by another. But David knew that his companion would not act without his consent, either formal or implied. He recognized that the responsibility still would be his, whoever might be the tool in the murder. He decided that he would not meet Saul's envy, malice, hatred and murderous spirit with the same spirit,—returning evil for evil,—but, instead, he would requite his evil and murderous intentions with mercy. This was not merely a matter of policy, but evidently David never had in his heart any murderous spirit towards Saul, for this was now the second time he had him in his power and might have destroyed him. We are not to suppose that David loved Saul with an affectionate love any more than he would have loved any other person of such a character. He loved him in the sense referred to in our Golden Text—with the kind of love it is proper to feel toward our enemies;—the love of sympathy and compassion which, however it might disapprove the character, etc., of the enemy, would neither do him injury nor encourage others to do so, but would spare his life and be ready in any manner to do him a kindness.

There is a good lesson here for all spiritual Israelites. We are to recognize the Lord's appointments and permissions, not in respect only to earthly governments, but also, and particularly, in respect to those whom God has *set* in the church. Even though such should become enemies of righteousness, it is not for us to accomplish their destruction. The Lord, who called us to the kingdom and who has promised to give it to us in his own due time, declares it his will that in the present time we should live peaceably, and to exercise patience, moderation and kindness even toward our enemies—toward those who would destroy us or who are pursuing us with the intention of assassinating our characters, or what not. We are not to render evil for evil, nor railing for railing, nor slander for slander; but contrariwise, are to speak as kindly of our enemies as we can, and to think as generously of them as possible—in no sense of the word either physically or with our tongues or otherwise may we retaliate or manifest their spirit, but return good for evil, mercy and compassion for malice and injury.

After David and his companion had reached a position of safety, and when the proper time had come, they hailed the king and chief general, and called their attention to the fact that the king's life had been in jeopardy, but had been spared; and as proofs they showed the spear and water bottle and informed the king that these would be returned to a messenger whom he might send for them. It was not improper that David should let all know the spirit of magnanimity which had controlled his conduct in this matter. The king at once recognized the situation, and had manhood enough to confess it promptly and to apologize for his own contrary course. David's procedure conquered him.

The results of well-doing are not always so apparent as in this case, because some evil-doers have less character and principle than had Saul,—unappreciative, envious and malicious as he was. But even if our rendering of good for evil fail to bring the acknowledgment of the evil-doer it nevertheless is right, and becomes a blessing to us. It is the evil-doer who loses by his failure to be conquered by our kindness. Although Saul evidently repented, David knew better than to trust himself to his power; and there is a lesson in this for us also, viz., that while generous toward our enemies, returning them good for their evil, we should not be too readily convinced of reformation on their part, but should realize, as David did in Saul's case, that he was under control of an evil spirit, and that therefore any acknowledgment of wrong or profession of reformation should be esteemed a passing emotion rather than a change of disposition until reasonable time should be given for a demonstration of a change of heart.

David's answer to Saul, under all the circumstances, was a model of truthfulness and forbearance. He neither affirmed nor denied Saul's guilt, nor did he solicit the king's favor and mercy. On the other hand he declared his confidence in God—that he would deal with every man according to his righteousness and mercy—and showed that it was his respect for God and his standards that spared the king's life. He declared that as he had shown mercy toward the king, he was trusting in the Lord to show mercy toward him, and that in the Lord—not in the king—he trusted for compassion and help, to deliver him from all tribulations. To what extent David appreciated the high standard of his own expression we do not know. Being a prophet, he frequently typified the Christ, head and body. His words are certainly more appropriate for the church than they were for him personally. David was still under the law and must therefore be judged

by the law, which, as the Apostle declares, proves that there is none righteous, no not one. In our day, however, we may be covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness, so that "the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in us who are walking not after the flesh but after the spirit." Our heart intentions for righteousness are acceptable to the Lord under the merits of Christ's sacrifice. Our desires and endeavors to be faithful to him and to his Word are accepted instead of perfect works, and hence we may expect that in due time the Lord will accept us in the Beloved, to the glory of his kingdom. Again David's sentiments are ours and his principles those which appeal to us when he declares that God would have mercy upon him as he had mercy upon Saul. This is the very essence of our Master's teaching—"If ye forgive not men for trespasses against you neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses"—he who shows no mercy shall obtain no mercy.

As Saul recognized the spirit that was in David as being more righteous than his own, and declared that ultimately David would be prospered greatly, so do the enemies of spiritual Israelites realize the difference between their conduct and that of those who are guided by the Lord's spirit—although they do not often candidly acknowledge the matter as did Saul. The class represented by Saul is a numerous one. It discerns and acknowledges righteousness but follows unrighteousness: it discerns the good but opposes it with evil. Let us, in respect to faith in God and desire to please him, be like David, whose name signifies beloved, and who, as already intimated, in many respects was a *type* of the Beloved—Christ, head and body.

GREAT OPPORTUNITIES MISUSED

1 SAM. 31:1-13.—SEPTEMBER 6.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death."*—Prov. 14:12.

King Saul's life as a whole was a blunder and a failure. It opened with grand possibilities and opportunities under divine favor and the love and adoration of his countrymen. Not only his personal qualities were in many respects estimable, but even his physical proportions—head and shoulders above his fellows, goodly to look upon, and attractive to his people—had added to his influence. Yet he failed. A valuable lesson may be drawn by each of us from the causes of his failure. A contemporary sums up his case thus:

"Saul had many noble and lovable qualities, such as bravery, promptitude—in his earlier days modesty and generosity. All these he had by nature, but there is no sign that he ever sought to cultivate his moral character or to win any grace that did not come naturally to him; nor is there any reason to suppose that religion had ever had any strong hold upon him. From the baleful influence of his selfishness, as before some hot poison-wind, all the flowers of good dispositions were burned up, and the bad stimulated to growth. His earlier virtues disappeared and passed into their opposites. Modesty became arrogance, and a long course of indulgence in self-will developed cruelty, gloomy suspicion and passionate anger, and left him the victim and slave of his own causeless hate. He who rebels against God mars his own character. The miserable last years of Saul, haunted and hunted as by a demon by his own indulged and swollen rebellion and unsleeping suspicion, are an example of the sorrows that ever dog sin; and, as he fell by his own sword in his final battle at Gilboa, the terrible saying recurs to our memory: 'He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.' "

Saul's difficulty, which led to all this disaster, was his selfishness—and he was not unusually selfish either. The great majority of mankind are equally selfish—self-willed; and the great majority, like him, make a failure of whatever possibilities were before them at the first. As David's career illustrates the wisdom and advantage of an early consecration to the will of the Lord, and the blessing which must surely attend such a course—even though those blessings be accompanied with trials and difficulties—so Saul's course in a general way illustrates the error of those who measurably ignore the Lord and attempt to direct their own paths. Such will surely find themselves misled by their selfish ambitions as Saul was by his. Saul's two special transgressions were: (1) his offering of sacrifice, which, according to divine arrangement, he had no right to offer (1 Sam. 13:1-14); (2) his disobedience of another direct command of the Lord, as recorded in 1 Sam. 15:1-13. It may be argued that King David also erred and did contrary to the Lord's will on several occasions, but we are to notice the wide difference between these two characters, in that David's heart was apparently always loyal to the Lord, and that when overtaken in a fault his sorrow therefor was sincere and led to greater carefulness in the future. With Saul, on the contrary, the difficulty seems to have been with the heart—that at heart he was not submissive to the Lord's will but was guided by his own will, and merely repented and apologized through fear of consequences and not from sorrow at having deviated from the Lord's way.

Herein we may note a great difference between people nominally the Lord's today: The truly consecrated may stumble, may err, but at heart they are ever loyal to the Lord and wish to serve and please him. These are spiritual Israelites indeed, and the blessing of the Lord is upon them. The other class professes to be the Lord's people, but at heart are far from him, and merely draw nigh with their lips and outward ceremonies. They have neither part nor lot with the others, and will surely reap the results of their own self-will so far as any opportunities under the present call are concerned. Another writer has well said:

"When Saul forsook God there necessarily was a separation between him and God; and an evil spirit took possession of his heart. We see no sign of God's doing anything direct to hasten Saul's doom. He was left to work out the natural results of an evil heart, and a life guided by passion and selfishness, without the help and direction of God. He spent his time in hunting David instead of overcoming his enemies. His kingdom was thus neglected, his people discontented, many of his best men abandoned him and went over to David, and together were driven into the enemies' country. His army lost courage, and in the last great battle he was weakened and worn by spending the night in consulting a witch instead of preparing for his work. So that he perished miserably by suicide at last. 'He ate of the fruit of his own way, and was filled with his own devices.' "—Prov. 1:3.

Our lesson concerns the closing days of Saul's experiences. The Philistines with an army had penetrated the kingdom of Israel, and Saul, with an opposing army, went forth to engage them in battle. The two armies encamped not far from Nazareth. We can easily imagine the dejection of mind which led King Saul on the night before the battle to consult the witch at Endor. In his self-will he neglected the Lord's will in general and was filled with hatred for David, because he realized that it was the Lord's will to ultimately bring the latter to the throne of Israel. He realized, therefore, that in opposing David, who did him no harm, but was really one of his most loyal subjects, he was in fact fighting against God. And now, on the eve of battle, it is no wonder that he felt downcast and dejected, because when he sought to inquire of the Lord he got no response. He bethought him of the witch of Endor and concluded to inquire of her respecting the outcome of the battle on the morrow. Here again he knew that his course was in opposition to the divine will; for he himself had given instructions for the execution of the Lord's command of Deut. 18:10, 12; Exod. 22:18. His course in this matter illustrated the quality of his disposition which the Lord disapproved. Knowing that communication with the evil spirits through mediums was disapproved of God, he nevertheless pursued the wrong course. Similarly some of God's people today, notwithstanding the instruction of the Scriptures that they should not seek those having familiar spirits, etc., have attended Spiritualistic seances "just to see how it is done." Such a disposition to be careless of the Lord's instruction, self-willed, was the one which got Saul into trouble and surely will make trouble for those who have it today. God is not pleased with those who are careless of his commands: he lets them take their own way as he permitted Saul to take his own way; but, however wise such a self-willed way may appear at the time, the end is sure to be disastrous so far as peace and fellowship with the Lord are concerned. Only those who are fully committed to the Lord and who love the Lord's will better than their own can expect to have fulfilled toward them the promise, "All things shall work together for good to them that love God."

The narrative of the lesson is very simple and requires very little comment. Saul and three of his sons and his entire bodyguard perished in the battle, in which the Philistines seemed to have specially pursued the royal party. Saul committed suicide, lest falling alive into the hands of his enemies they would have tortured him, as was not infrequently the custom in that day. The Philistines, of course, rejoiced in his discomfiture, and as an evidence of their victory his head was sent as a trophy to one and another of their cities. They

were worshipers of the goddess Ashtaroth, and as a memorial of their victory Saul's armor was hung in one of her temples. The bodies of Saul and his sons were fastened to the outside wall of the city of Bethshan as a mark of special indignity, but they were soon recovered by men from the tribe of Manasseh, who, probably to prevent further desecration to the bodies, burned them, and subsequently buried the ashes, unconsumed bones, etc.

The Golden Text is worthy of being committed to memory by all. Its lesson is that we are not competent to guide and direct our own affairs; that we need divine counsel. Human judgment would be unreliable even if supported by absolute knowledge; but in view of our deficiency in knowledge as well as in judgment, very evidently to man many ways seem right and wise and advantageous and desirable which, pursued, lead to disappointment and chagrin and ultimately would lead to death—second death. The wise, proper course for all, therefore, is to realize and acknowledge our own insufficiency, unwisdom, and to look to our great Creator for guidance. Happy are those who heed the Scriptural injunction, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." The earlier this right course is begun the better will be the results every way, the easier will it for us to bend our wills to the will of the Lord; and the lessons and satisfaction and peace coming to us through the Lord's guidance will be the more precious. A full consecration of the heart and life and all our interests to the Lord, that his will may be done in us in all things, is the consecration necessary to the bringing of every justified believer into fellowship in the body of Christ, which is the church.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

LYNCHINGS PRECURSORY TO ANARCHY

The prevalence of an anarchous spirit has for some time past been manifesting itself in the lynching of reputed criminals. The law-supporting and law-defying elements seem to clash in some men's minds, and the lynchers merely try to gratify both at one time. They gratify their desire to violate law and still their consciences with the thought that they are meting out justice. Doubtless the same mixture of sentiment accompanied the religious stake-burnings and rackings of the past: the victims were declared by high church dignitaries to be "heretics," propagators of "monstrous doctrines," "injurious to the church and the state." To the ignorant these charges justified any and every torture in their destruction. Doubtless there would again be danger to those dubbed "*unorthodox*" were it not for the Babel of doctrine now prevailing, which renders it difficult to determine where the lines of "orthodoxy" could be drawn to the satisfaction of a great majority. Who knows that in the near future, under the proposed *consolidation* of Christian religions (which we have for the past twenty years predicted from the Scriptures, and which comes closer yearly), this condition may not be reached—that mobs may not burn "heretics"? The Scriptures lead us to expect some such anarchistic conditions now,—preceding the establishment of the kingdom.

THE PRESIDENT'S VIEWS ON MOB VIOLENCE

Governor Durbin of Indiana not only called out the state militia to suppress a lynching, but under his commands the mob was scattered with considerable loss of life. The President of the United States, in an open letter, thanked him for his vindication of the law. We make liberal extracts from his letter as follows:—

My Dear Governor Durbin:—

Permit me to thank you as an American citizen for the admirable way in which you have vindicated the majesty of the law by your recent action in reference to lynching. I feel, my dear sir, that you have made all men your debtors who believe, as far-seeing men must, that the well-being, indeed the very existence, of the republic depends upon that spirit of orderly liberty under the law which is as incompatible with mob violence as with any form of despotism. Of course mob violence is simply one form of anarchy; and anarchy is now, as it always has been, the handmaid and forerunner of tyranny.

I feel that you have not only reflected honor upon the state which for its good fortune has you for its chief executive, but upon the whole nation. It is incumbent upon every man throughout this country not only to hold up your hands in the course you have been following, but to show his realization that the matter is one of vital concern to us all.

All thoughtful men must feel the gravest alarm over the growth of lynching in this country, and especially over the peculiarly hideous forms so often taken by mob violence when colored men are the victims—on which occasion the mob seems to lay most weight, not on the crime but on the color of the criminal. In a certain proportion of these cases the man lynched has been guilty of a crime horrible beyond description; a crime so horrible that as far as he himself is concerned he has forfeited the right to any kind of sympathy whatsoever.

The feeling of all good citizens that such a hideous crime shall not be hideously punished by mob violence is due not in the least to sympathy for the criminal, but to a very lively sense of the train of dreadful consequences which follow the course taken by the mob in exacting inhuman vengeance for an inhuman wrong. In such cases, moreover, it is well to remember that the criminal not merely sins against humanity in inexpiable and unpardonable fashion, but sins particularly against his own race, and does them a wrong far greater than any white man can possibly do them. . . .

Moreover, every effort should be made under the law to expedite the proceedings of justice in the case of such an awful crime. But it cannot be necessary in order to accomplish this to deprive any citizen of those fundamental rights to be heard in his own defense which are so dear to us all and lie at the root of our liberty. It certainly ought to be possible by the proper administration of the laws to secure swift vengeance upon the criminal; and the best and immediate efforts of all legislators, judges and citizens should be addressed to securing such reforms in our legal procedure as to leave no vestige of excuse for those misguided men who undertake to reap vengeance through violent measures. . . .

But even where the real criminal is reached, the wrong done by the mob to the community itself is well nigh as great. Especially is this true where the lynching is accompanied with torture. There are certain hideous sights which when once seen can never be wholly erased from the mental retina. The mere fact of having seen them implies degradation. This is a thousand fold stronger when instead of merely seeing the deed the man has participated in it. Whoever in any part of our country has ever taken part in lawlessly putting to death a criminal by the dreadful torture of fire must forever after have the awful spectacle of his own handiwork seared into his brain and soul. He can never again be the same man.

This matter of lynching would be a terrible thing even if it stopped with the lynching of men guilty of the inhuman and hideous crime of rape; but as a matter of fact lawlessness of this type never does stop and never can stop in such fashion. Every violent man in the community is encouraged by every case of lynching in which the lynchers go unpunished to himself take the law into his own hands whenever it suits his own convenience.

In the same way the use of torture by the mob in certain cases is sure to spread until it is applied more or less indiscriminately in other cases. The spirit of lawlessness grows with what it feeds on, and when mobs with impunity lynch criminals for one crime, they are certain to begin to lynch real or alleged criminals for other causes. . . .

The nation, like the individual, cannot commit a crime with impunity. If we are guilty of lawlessness and brutal violence, whether our guilt consists in active participation therein or in mere connivance and encouragement, we shall assuredly suffer later on because of what we have done. The corner stone of this republic, as of all free governments, is respect for and obedience to the law. Where we permit the law to be defied or evaded, whether by rich man or poor man, by black man or white, we are by just so much weakening the bonds of our civilization and increasing the chances of its overthrow, and of the substitution therefor of a system in which there shall be violent alternations of anarchy and tyranny. Sincerely yours,

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

LAWLESSNESS ON THE INCREASE

On this subject the *Jewish Exponent* says:—

"'The earth was filled with violence.' (Gen. 6:11) Are these words less true today than they were in the days of which the Bible speaks? Mob violence, race hatred, the subjugation of weaker nations—these things are accepted almost as matters of course by a large section of humanity. Each outbreak of lawless violence furnishes the fuel to kindle anew

the flames of passion and of hatred, until respect for law and authority is derisively mocked at and whole communities bow in helpless impotence before the cruel, brutal instincts of the unbridled mob.

"The truth of the matter is that all good men must have the courage of their convictions and their religious professions in instilling the lesson of respect for the law. The mob that burns a negro at the stake, even though he be guilty of the most heinous crime; the officer of high rank who ruthlessly orders his subordinates to burn and kill, even when a state of insurrection pervails; the private soldier who applies the fiendish water-cure to an uncommunicative prisoner—all these are alike enemies of human society. To condone their offense is simply an invitation for the inauguration of the reign of lawlessness, which in the end must result in the triumph of anarchy and the rule of the unreasoning mob. Failure to visit condign punishment for such offenses must eventually result in the paralysis of legal and orderly forms of government. 'Cruel and unusual punishment' is forbidden by the Constitution of the United States, which therein speaks not only the language of governmental authority, but voices the divine protest against man's inhumanity to man.

"The questions arising out of these recurrent exhibitions of lawlessness go to the root of all religious and ethical principles. To ignore them is the worst form of religious cowardice. To excuse or defend outbreaks against the fundamental law is the most dangerous because it is the most insidious form of treason. Civilized society cannot exist where offenders against the laws of the state are not tried calmly, fairly, dispassionately; nor can religion exercise its proper influence over the consciences of men unless it teaches them imperatively to yield a ready obedience to the constituted authorities. This is a lesson that all sections of the people must learn. Unless they learn it speedily, dark and sorrowful days are in store for those who love their fellow-men."

* * *

The Apostle foretold that evil men and seducers would wax worse and worse, and that disobedience to parents, headiness, boastfulness, and love of pleasure more than love of God, would mark nominal Christian sentiment in the end of this age. And if so, what wild excesses may we not anticipate from those who have not even "the form of godliness"? The Scriptures clearly indicate that the result will be world-wide anarchy—lawlessness.

For three reasons all who are of the truth should be specially on guard that the influence of their every word and act should be in accord with law and order and peace. (1) It is the command that each shall so far as possible "live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18), and be not a "brawler" nor a "striker" nor a "busybody." (Titus 3:2; 1:7; 1 Pet. 4:15) (2) Such "moderation" (Phil. 4:5) will commend the Gospel we preach and give us the greater influence in its service. (3) The time may come when the mob spirit will be incited against us as it was incited against the apostles and other early Christians. And although we should rejoice in a martyr's death if God so willed, we should do nothing to encourage or abet such lawlessness. The Master's word is, "In your *patience* possess ye your souls!"

WAR IN MACEDONIA, BULGARIA AND TURKEY

Present appearances are that war has started in earnest in the Balkans, and no human being can say where it will end. To us it appears wholly political, and not a war against Christians by Mohammedans. So far as we are able to judge the Christianity of that region is of a merely nominal sort. The *Gazette* gives a fairly good summary of the situation as follows:—

"Bulgarian and Macedonian agitators have perpetrated continuous outrages in the hope of inflaming the masses, and apparently they have succeeded in exhausting Turkish patience. The Turk has only been restrained up to the present time by the order of the Powers to keep hands off Bulgaria and to introduce prescribed reforms in Macedonia. The cables now indicate that the Turk has thrown off this restraint and proposes to at once inaugurate a campaign of pillage and slaughter, inciting fanatical Mohammedans to exterminate the Christian trouble-makers.

"This war of extermination is exactly what the Bulgarian agitators have been trying to bring about. They do not believe that Russia and Austria will permit the Turks to annihilate the Christian population of the Balkan states. Their program is first to have Bulgaria declare war in behalf of the Macedonians and to keep the turmoil going until Russia or Austria, or possibly both, shall intervene. Their ultimate object is to have the Balkan territories taken from Turkish rule, and it is not improbable that Turkey's resolution to begin active operations will lead to that result. The Powers have not wanted to be mixed in the matter, but they may find it impossible to stay out, for once the Turk is started he knows neither reason nor humanity.

"If Russia becomes involved, there is little doubt it will endeavor to make Turkey pay as the price of hostilities the surrender of Constantinople and the Bosporus. That will let Russia down to the Mediterranean. It has long desired to reach that goal. It was prevented from securing it at the conclusion of the last war with Turkey by the interference of the other Powers of Europe. Since then it has avoided conflict in order to develop its financial position and industrial resources. But if Russia is forced to fight for the restoration of peace on its Balkan borders it will not be cheated again. It will take over the direct management of the turbulent territory, and it will take along with that troublesome charge its coveted outlet to the southern sea. Hence the situation may fairly be regarded as a very serious one."

BURNED LIVE KITTENS

HUMANE SOCIETY CHARGES A WOMAN WITH A HORRIBLE ACT OF CRUELTY.

Mrs. Fannie Salomsky of No. 1534 Pike street is charged with cruelty to animals by Humane Agent Edward Thompson before Alderman G. F. Oyer. It is said that on Wednesday some boys put a grape basket in her yard containing five small kittens. The woman heard the kittens crying, and after locating them in the basket ordered her little son to put the basket in a fire that was burning in the street. The boy took the basket and threw it in the flames. The kittens began to feel the heat of the basket burning and set up a loud cry. The woman was arrested and gave $300 bail for a hearing—Pittsburg *Gazette*.

* * *

Does it not seem remarkable that, in our day, when such anti-cruelty sentiments so generally prevail and the cruelties of the dark ages are so generally condemned, that the creeds of those times still have their votaries, who somehow consider that they honor God in ascribing to him a character for cruelty and cruel designs against his human creatures such as quite overshadow the meanest cruelties known to the most depraved of earth? Oh, shame! Let God be true though it prove every creed of men a lie! Let us get back to the Bible and assure ourselves that the Lord is truthful when he says: "Their fear is not of me, but is taught by the precepts of men."—Isa. 29:13.

A reëxamination of the subject will show that misconceptions of the Bible's teachings are built upon an unconscious violation of language which makes of such words as perish, lost, lose life, destroy, death, etc., mean their very *opposites*, viz., preserve in torture everlastingly. When we learn to give words their true meaning, and learn that in parables the fire is as symbolic as the sheep and goats and wheat and tares; and that the Book of Revelation is wholly symbolic, and that its "lake of fire and brimstone" is *explained* to mean "the second death" (Rev. 20:14), then our eyes will begin to see out of the smoke and confusion of mystic Bablyon. Then we can see God's true character, and love and praise him with our whole heart.

"DANCING PREFERRED TO DEVOTION

Prof. Goldwin Smith, whose repute as a man of letters is world-wide, remarks as follows:—

"Methodism in England is downcast at finding that the increase of the church has only been one per cent. Leaders complain that zeal is growing cold, that whist is preferred to class meetings, and dancing to devotion. The original enthusiasm, which wrought such wonders in its day, has done its work and is now spent. There is no use and there is considerable danger in struggling to keep up the hollow forms of it. The ordinary man must have pleasure, whist, valsing or whatever it may be; without it not only would life be dreary, but character would sour. A reasonable share of it in innocent forms is almost as necessary as food. Nor does it interfere with spiritual life, if by spiritual life is meant a life of aspiration to a character superior to our animal wants and desires. The Methodist church on this continent seems to have recognized the fact, and to be cultivating in various ways the element of social enjoyment in the religious union. Its danger here, and a serious danger, is that into the place of spiritual aspiration may creep social and political ambition."

YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

"Ye are the light of the world, . . . let your light shine. . . . Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all shall be fulfilled. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men to, he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees ye shall in nowise enter into the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. 5:14-20.

Our Lord's sermon on the mount, from which these words are chosen for our present consideration, was a discourse remarkable for its simplicity and its weighty import. From beginning to end there are in it no attempts at literary embellishment nor oratory nor flights of fancy to please and entertain. His object was to instruct, and he did so in the most simple and forcible language. It will be observed, too, that he did not on this occasion seek a public place where the largest audience could be gathered; but, on the contrary, he chose a place of retirement where he could be alone with his disciples. The multitudes had thronged about him to witness his miracles and to hear his words, and he had healed their sickness and taught them many things, but this discourse was one specially designed for his disciples, the household of faith. And here it has been faithfully recorded, that its instructions may extend to the entire household, even to the end of the age. So while we consider these words of our Lord, we may almost realize that in company with Peter and James and John, and many of the brethren and sisters of the early church, we, too, are sitting on the grassy slopes of the mountain side and hearing the words as they fall from the lips of the greatest preacher the world has ever known. And as we turn away from the hallowed spot, let us not be forgetful hearers, but let us treasure up the words of life; let them sink deep into our hearts and bring forth their rich fruitage unto eternal life.

This fragment of our Lord's discourse indicates a responsiblity toward the truth received which it is feared many Christians do not carefully observe and consider. Mark the expression. "*Ye* are the light of the world; . . . let your light shine." And again he said, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world; . . . he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 9:5; 8-12) And now, instructed and enlightened from his Word, he would have us remember that we, as his representatives, are the light of the world, and that we should keep our light constantly trimmed and burning—that we must let our light shine so that those following us may not walk in darkness.

Light is a symbol of truth, both in the Scriptures and in common parlance. So the expression, "Ye are the light of the world; . . . let your light shine," is equivalent to saying —"You are now so illuminated by the truth that you yourself have become a living representative of the truth. So do not in any way obscure it, but let it shine out more and more, that others may be similarly blessed by it." This truth is "the light of life;" it is what the world needs—what all must have before they can attain unto everlasting life. Men must know the truth before the truth can make them free from the bondage of sin and death; they must know the truth before the truth can cleanse and sanctify them. It is the will of God, therefore, that all men shall come to an accurate knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. 2:4) And therefore it is the duty of every child of God to be very active in the dissemination of the truth—in letting his light shine, and in keeping it trimmed and burning.

"'Trimmed and burning!' 'trimmed and burning!'" says some thoughtful soul. "I have often sung with fervor those words, 'Let the lower lights be burning,' 'Trim your lamps,' etc., but what does it mean?" It means that we must give very close attention to the words of life that we may come to an exact knowledge of the truth, and that we must carefully and faithfully trim away every vestige of error as fast as it becomes apparent to us—whether it be an error in doctrine or in our daily walk and conversation—so that the pure light of divine truth may shine out with as little obstruction as possible through the medium of a clear and transparent character.

It is a lamentable fact that many of the Lord's children seem very indifferent to this matter of trimming their lights. They get some truth and with it a great deal of error; and instead of trying to eliminate the error, they hold and teach the two together, so that the light they shed is not a pure light, but is colored and distorted by the shades with which it is mixed. And again, even when much pure truth is held, there are those who fail to let it have its cleansing effect upon the character, and so the light is obscured and misrepresented by the unclean medium through which it passes. Any who continue thus to hold the sacred trust of truth are really unworthy of it, and must eventually lose it; for it is written, "Light [truth] is sown for the righteous"; and such indifference to the claims of the truth is unrighteousness.

In our Lord's day there were those who openly professed to be teachers and representatives of divine truth. The scribes and pharisees professed to be very zealous for the truth, and thought themselves very creditable manifestations of its cleansing power. They claimed to have the light and to be letting it shine. "God," said the pharisee, "I thank thee that I am not as other men. . . . I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all I possess." But the Lord said, "Woe unto you. . . . Ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and deceit." So they appeared in the Lord's sight; but they were reverenced and honored of men and esteemed as holy, and as guides in the way of truth and holiness. To God's law they presumed to add their own vain and foolish traditions, which made void the law of God, and they were very zealous in teaching these traditions to the people.

In so doing those teachers were inexcusable. The law of God was open before them, and it was their privilege and their duty to be correctly informed with reference to it. And especially after Christ had come, and by his teaching had made the truth so manifest, and the absurdity of their vain traditions so apparent, they were without excuse. And our Lord's accusation of hypocrisy well fitted their case when they resolutely determined to hold and teach the traditions of the Elders and to oppose the increasing light of truth which made their absurdity so manifest.

The scribes and pharisees had much truth: they had the whole law of God and claimed to believe and teach it; but they miserably colored and distorted it by their traditions and their really ignoble, though whitewashed characters. And consequently their efforts, professedly to convert men to God, resulted only in making more hypocrites like themselves.

"I say unto you," said the Lord to his disciples, "that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Let us beware of that kind of righteousness which to men may indeed appear fair and praiseworthy, but which, in God's estimation, is mere sham and hypocrisy. God, who reads the heart, quickly discerns the motives with which we receive or disseminate the Truth; and foolish indeed is the man who attempts to make merchandise of this divine treasure for the paltry gains of this fleeting life, who prefers to hold and to teach error and becloud or oppose the truth of God, or to sell it after having once accepted it, for money, or influence, or popularity among his dying fellow-travelers on the way to the tomb, or for any consideration whatever.

And yet there are some who, though they do not thus hypocritically make merchandise of the Truth, do in a measure undervalue it, and who, both in the present and in the future, will be the losers thereby. If we permit prejudice, or some measure of self-emulation, or of pride, or of combativeness, or any other thing, to interrupt the freedom of artless candor and simplicity and that spirit of meekness which alone befits the searchers after truth, we will find ourselves approaching the pharisaical spirit which, when fully ripe, becomes glaring hypocrisy. Those who avoid such a disposition, and who, therefore, in meekness and sincerity fully accept the truth and zealously teach it at any cost or sacrifice, shall, the Lord says, be called great in the kingdom of heaven; while those who hold and teach a measure of error when it was their privilege to have clear truth, had they been in the right condition of heart to receive it, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.—Matt. 5:19.

Prejudices and various old deformities of disposition often greatly retard the progress of some of God's sincerely consecrated children; and in consequence their efforts, which are verily meant to be in God's service, are misdirected, and they are found both believing and teaching contrary to the truth on points where God's word is very explicit. Let us beware of these things, and, diligently casting behind us every hindrance to our personal progress in the way of truth and to our usefulness in the Master's service, let us run with patience, with meekness and diligence the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, who has said, "My grace is sufficient for thee. My strength is made perfect in weakness."

ST. LUKE AS ARTIST

St. Luke, the Evangelist, physician and historian, is said by tradition to have been a painter, and perhaps in the picturesque qualities of his writings we may trace the origin of this pious opinion. There is a legend that he painted the portrait of the Virgin, and certainly the greater part of the little we know of our Lord's mother is due to St. Luke, who preserved for us the Magnificat, and drew in words that poetic picture of the Nativity, adorned with the Nunc Dimittis and the Benedictus, which pictorial art has never ceased to reproduce. There is just now a widespread desire to discover the personalities of all great writers, and surely there is no one who has any feeling for Christianity but must regret our ignorance about the four evangelists. St. Luke is the only one of whose character it is possible to form any definite idea. Even in his case we must rely mainly upon conjecture, for the modest chronicler of the Acts of the Apostles has purposely withdrawn himself from the gaze of his readers. He never tells us who he was, nor asks for our sympathy or our praise for the many hardships which he and St. Paul bore, and the many heroisms they displayed together. He never even betrays his presence except by the use of the pronoun "we." All we know for certain is that the "beloved physician" never failed his friend, but was alone with him when he made "'ready to be offered." There is no direct evidence as to whether he was a Jew or a Greek, but many authorities, including Renan and Professor Ramsay, adhere to the latter conclusion. To the ordinary reader their view would appear the more plausible. St. Luke shows little sympathy with the Jews as a nation, and always paints them as hindering the work of the church. On the other hand, he betrays some tolerance for the heathen religion around him, and a just and sympathetic comprehension of the attitude of the Roman Governors towards the new faith.

But whether he belonged to "the people" or "the nations," the historian was an artist,—a man of great literary genius, whose heaven-instilled purpose, while it inspired his work, never for a moment obscured his artistic skill. The object of the book of the Acts is, as we read it, twofold. First, the author desires to draw a picture of the early church while it was still but an offshoot of Judaism; and secondly, to describe the bursting of the Judaic bonds by the real hero of the book—St. Paul. Inspired by his wonderful—we are tempted to say his Greek—love of beauty and happiness, St. Luke begins with an exquisite picture of the early Christian community. An ideal social life prevailed among the brethren. "No man lacked anything," for "they had but one heart and one mind." No one "called anything his own, but they had all things in common," and "breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." We are told that "a great peace was upon them all," and that they possessed singular gifts of healing. Their increasing influence with the people disquieted the high priests, who, "doubting how far this would grow," summoned the apostles to appear before them and tried to bind them over to silence. Peter and John, however, replied to their accusers with light-hearted courage, saying, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than to God, judge ye," and so far impressed the learned Gamaliel with their assurance that he begged his brethren to let them alone lest they themselves should be found fighting against God. When persecution threatened, St. Luke shows us the disciples assembling themselves together and praying that God, seeing their peril, would "grant unto his servants that with all boldness they might speak his word by stretching out his hand to heal, that signs and wonders might be done by the might of his holy child." In the next picture which St. Luke puts before us the state of the church is somewhat changed. The brotherhood has been greatly enlarged, and we trace some diminution in the early simplicity and joyousness. There arose, we are told, a murmuring among the Christian poor because some were better cared for than others;—evidently there is no longer community of goods. Certain men are chosen for the work of practical philanthropy, among them Stephen, who, by giving offence to the orthodox Jews, became the first martyr. In presenting Stephen to his readers St. Luke departs a little from his ordinary method of character-drawing. Generally he adheres strictly to the dramatic method, and allows his characters to reveal themselves by their own words. But in the case of Stephen it is not so, and the world knows Stephen better by what St. Luke tells us about him than by the long discourse which is reported as his. We are convinced by his biographer rather than by his eloquence that "he was full of faith and power," and that his hearers "were not able to resist the wisdom and power by which he spake," so that "all that sat in the council looking steadfastly upon him saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." By the description of his actual martyrdom this impression of spiritual fascination is confirmed in the reader's mind, and perhaps the picture of Stephen "looking into heaven," seeing the "glory of God," and forgiving his enemies, while they, "cut to the heart, gnashed upon him with their teeth," is for mere beauty of depiction the finest passage in the Acts. This moment of tragedy is the one which St. Luke chooses as the one in which to present St. Paul. "The witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man whose name was Saul."

Once more the scene changes. Henceforward the reader's interest centers round Paul,—his conversion, his perils, his trials and his defences. As we read St. Paul's words as recorded by his friend it is impossible not to wonder to what extent they have been modified by passing through the medium of another mind. Was St. Luke's report always accurate? Verbal accuracy was surely impossible. It is out of the question. If a speech took some hours to deliver it is not possible to compress it into a short paragraph and maintain verbal accuracy. All the same, the short report may be a true one. A man may give in ten minutes an account of a speech he has heard in the House of Commons, and may convey truly both the subject matter of what was spoken, and also the manner and mental characteristics of the speaker, though he give up all attempt at a literal repetition of the sentences. Such a report could not be called imaginary, though it makes of necessity some tax upon the understanding and imagination of the reporter. The account would remain essentially true, and in this matter of essential truth, so far as St. Paul is concerned, every reader of the Bible who has the smallest grasp of character is in a position to check St. Luke. Is the Paul whose adventures we follow in the Acts the same perfectly original character who reveals himself to us so unreservedly in his letters? Undoubtedly he is. No one could fail to recognize the great Apostle.

Nevertheless, every portrait reveals the painter in some degree, and in all St. Luke's sketches of character we see the same aversion to dogmatism, and the same fair attitude toward "those of the contrary part." He dwells particularly upon any sympathetic allusion to the classical standpoint made by the apostles, repeating with evident sympathy the words spoken by St. Paul suggesting the nearness of God toward those philosophers who had "felt after him"; and again, when Paul prevents the populace from worshiping him, we catch a glimpse of St. Lukes artistic appreciation of the joyousness inherent in a point of view which, however erroneous, bore testimony to the goodness of God, "who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without a witness in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

All through his book St. Luke shows the characteristics of a man of much education. He seems almost to share the high priest's surprise at the eloquence and force of Peter and John, "seeing that they were unlearned and ignorant men," and he displays that distrust of the multitude so common in men of exceptional gifts exceptionally cultivated. Witness his allusions to "fellows of the baser sort," and his account of the mass meeting of the Ephesian silversmiths, where "some cried one thing and some another, for the more part knew not why they were come together." The sudden changes of mind observable in crowds strike the historian's notice. He describes how the barbarians of the island on which Paul was shipwrecked, on seeing him bitten by a snake, concluded that he must be some murderer flying from justice whom vengeance had overtaken. "They looked that he should have swollen and fallen down dead suddenly; but after they had looked a great while and seen no harm come to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god." Again we see a trace of the same feeling in the almost satirical account of the behavior of the Jewish rabble before Gallio, when with utter inconsequence they beat Sosthenes in the Judgment Hall because they could not be revenged on Paul, and we feel St. Luke is not wholly out of sympathy with the supercilious Gallio, who looked on at what he considered a quarrel "about words and names and their law," and "cared for none of these things." To Gallio himself it can never have occurred that his name would be known two thousand years later solely in connection with a petty riot he hardly noticed, any more than it occurred to Festus how bitterly the course of history would satirize his contemptuous summing-up of Christianity as a question of Jewish "superstition," and of "one Jesus who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive." Man has a treacherous memory. It is hopeless to say what he may remember, or to gauge how much he will forget. Agrippa, Felix, Festus, Gallio, would have been as dead men out of mind but for St. Luke's pencil. St. Luke showed wherein lies "the artist's vantage o'er the king."—*London Spectator.*

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Question.—In what condition will those be who have been justified by faith in this age, and who yet refuse to consecrate because they think restitution blessings good enough for them, who feel afraid that they could not carry out their consecration vows, and, therefore hold back and do not make them? Is it possible for a person to be justified in this age and then be justified again in the next age? Or does justification count only when it is used as a stepping stone to consecration?

Answer.—We are to remember the meaning of the word justification; it signifies a righteous condition, acceptable to God. God's provision for the world through Christ is justification—that so many as desire may come back to righteousness,—to harmony with the Creator. The time for this return to divine favor, as respects the world in general, will be the Millennial age; and the way of return will be through restitution processes, physical, mental and moral, up to perfection. Meantime, before the Millennial age, God designs the selection of a church to be associated with Jesus in the work of restitution; and wishing to deal with these before the restitution times, he grants them a faith-justification or *reckoned* righteousness, a reckoned reconciliation and harmony with God, based upon their exercise of faith in him, and in his arrangements and promises. Thus we read in the New Testament that we who believe in Jesus are justified *by faith*—justified freely from all things—treated as though we were all right, in full accord with God, although really we are physically, mentally and morally unright, in that we are not absolutely perfect.

God's object in providing this reckoned, or faith-justification during this Gospel age is to permit the justified ones to present themselves living sacrifices, holy (justified) and acceptable. Whoever fails to take this step of consecration—sacrifice—fails to use his faith-justification in the manner and for the purpose intended. He receives that much of the grace of God in vain, as respects God's intention and the only use for this justification in the present time. Failing to use this justification now within a reasonable time would, we understand, vitiate it, and the person would cease to maintain his justified standing before God;—but just at what juncture of his Christian experience he might be thus set aside, we will not always be able to judge. We would understand that those who thus receive God's favor in vain are not necessarily debarred from all opportunities for the future, though we may be sure that the failure to use privileges seen and enjoyed, will not work any special advantage to such, but rather probably the reverse.

Question.—Could Adam have developed a character without the knowledge of good and evil? What kind of character did he have prior to the disobedience and fall?

Answer.—A participation in sin is not essential to the development of character; otherwise God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ and the holy angels would have to be classed as amongst those destitute of character. Surely God himself is to be considered as possessing character of the very highest class, and hence his creature Adam, made in his own likeness, must have possessed a good character. So must a faultless character belong to all the angelic sons of God, and to his first-begotten. Character may be tested and buttressed and supported by experience or by observation. The holy angels who kept their first estate have evidently strengthened their characters by observation. Seeing sin in others and noting its evil fruit, they have doubtless been made the more strong in their determination for that holiness in which they were created and which they have maintained. But had sin never been permitted, this buttressing of character by the holy angels through observation would have been impossible.

Adam, in the divine image, and, therefore, of excellent character, was subjected to a peculiar temptation, to which probably he would not have yielded had he been granted the same acquaintance with righteousness and with his Creator that the holy angels enjoyed. God left him in this condition, knowing in advance how it would result, and prepared for the rescue of the race in advance, in that feature of his plan which foresaw "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." God chose to give Adam and his race an experience in character-development through *contact* with sin and in overcoming it by the assistance he renders through the Redeemer. While, therefore, a certain degree of strong and good character may be created, the testing and proving and buttressing of that character and its everlasting insurance could not be accomplished without some lesson of either experience or observation. It pleased God to give man his lesson and testing through experience, and the angels the same lesson and testing through observation, and all his ways are perfect.

Question.—Were the ancient worthies begotten to life by the heavenly Father or our Lord Jesus? and if by the latter, how could it be, since he had not yet come, in their day, and had not yet offered the sacrifice for sins, nor taken any of the steps seemingly necessary to his assuming to them the relationship of "the everlasting Father?"

Answer.—The words "beget" and "born," as used in the Scriptures, apply specially to the Gospel church, to illustrate the small beginning of the new life, its gradual development and its final birth in the resurrection to the full perfection of the heavenly nature. This figure would not apply to the ancient worthies ,for the reasons you have mentioned and for other reasons. They were inspired with hopes toward God respecting future life, but had no promises of, and, therefore, could not properly have any hopes respecting a change to spiritual nature in the resurrection, or at any time. They could not, therefore, be said to have been begotten to any such spiritual hopes, nor ultimately to such condition.

The fact that Christ had not yet paid the penalty for sin precluded not only the possibility of his being their life-giver, but likewise precluded the possibility of any one being their life-giver up to that time. They are not, therefore, spoken of as having a new life begun in them, but merely as having discerned the new life in the distance, "having seen the promises afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them," by faith; but they had the new life neither actually nor reckonedly; they must wait for Messiah, because in him all the promises centered. They hoped for his birth of their lineage according to the flesh, and yet had they understood the divine Word and plan, they must have known that, instead of being the fathers of Messiah, they must in due time, in order to have life at all, become his children—receive life from him as the everlasting Father.—Psa. 45:16.

Instead of its being said of them that they were begotten to the future life, it is said that they were justified to a future life through faith in the divine promises.

WAITING PATIENTLY ON THE LORD

1 SAMUEL 2:1-10.—SEPTEMBER 13.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—Psa. 133:1.

"Ye have need of patience," writes the Apostle. "In your patience possess ye your souls," instructs our Lord. "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing," the Apostle explains. Very evidently patience, therefore, includes other graces of character—implies their possession to a certain extent. Amongst the Lord's people patience surely must be preceded by faith, and the degree of patience very generally measures the amount of the faith. The Christian who finds himself impatient and restless evidently is lacking in faith toward the Lord; for otherwise he would be able to rest in the Lord's gracious promises, and wait for their fulfilment. After using reasonable diligence and energy he should be content to leave the results and the times and seasons with the Lord.

Our lesson deals with David's attainment to the kingdom to which he was anointed, while a shepherd boy, by the prophet Samuel. His patient trust in the Lord, and waiting for his time and way to give him the kingdom, are worthy of note, and constitute the most striking feature of this lesson. As a youth he exercised patience until the Lord's providence brought him the opportunity of meeting Goliah, and being advanced to the position of a captain in the army and made King Saul's son-in-law. Then came the check in his career, when for seven years he was treated as an outlaw by the king, and more or less so regarded by his fellow-countrymen. We have seen his patience under these trying circumstances, and noted his unwillingness to hasten the Lord's arrangements, in which he fully trusted, his unwillingness to raise his hand against the king, or to sanction his death at the hands of another. This lesson shows us that even after the death of Saul David still waited patiently on the Lord to give him, in his own way, the honors and powers promised.

For some time before Saul's death David and his six hundred followers had been living in the country of the Philistines, and been treated by them as allies; and when the Philistines went to war with Israel—to fight against King Saul, who had been the enemy of David and his companions—it would have appeared strange had the latter refused to join in the war. In the Lord's providence they were very graciously spared from either fighting against their brethren or seeming unappreciative of their hosts, the Philistines, by the decision of the latter that they would prefer not to have David and his

company go with them. After the defeat of Saul and his army the Philistines took possession of a considerable portion of the land of Israel and it became a question for David as to what should be his proper course—how would the Lord give to him the throne of Israel, as promised? That David's heart was loyal to the Lord, as the needle to the pole, is evidenced by the fact that he did not conclude for himself what his course should be, but made inquiry of the Lord. This was probably done through the medium of the high priest, Abiathar. He got the Lord's answer and followed it to the letter, locating, with his companions and their families, at Hebron and the adjacent towns. David was of the tribe of Judah, and thus settling in a central city of that tribe, where he and his family were well known, he was safe amongst friends;—besides, the Philistines were his friends. It was not long before the people of his own tribe chose him for their king, and anointed him accordingly—thus falling into line with the Lord's choice and anointing, already expressed years before.

This was seemingly a good start toward the fulfilment of the Lord's promise of the kingdom, but again the matter was deferred for another seven years, during which time David patiently saw Ishbosheth, Saul's surviving son, anointed to be king over one province after another of Israel, and, with his general, Abner, gaining victory after victory over the Philistines,—seemingly establishing himself firmly in the power of the kingdom which David had certainly supposed was to come to him at the death of Saul. The experiences of these seven years surely were as strong tests of David's faith and patience as any in his career. To a man of his courageous temperament and energy the disposition must have been to assert the dominance of Judah over the other tribes, and to have declared them to be in rebellion, and to have attempted their conquest in the name of the Lord, with the assertion that he was the Lord's choice, anointed by Samuel, etc.

David's course during this time shows forth distinctly the true character of the man. He trusted that the Lord, who had been with him as a boy, and had delivered him from the lion and the bear, and had used him as Israel's champion in the battle with Goliath, and had guided him thus far, would continue to guide and direct, if he would continue to be submissive, and to act only along the lines of the Lord's direction. The wisdom of this course is manifest from the narrative. David showed, not only in his dealings with the men of Jabesh Gilead, but on other occasions, that he entertained no animosity toward those who were Saul's friends, and the friends of his family. A man of smaller heart would have done very differently, but would not have been "a man after God's own heart." David's course was defensive. The tribe of Judah he knew was acting in accord with the divine program, and hence, when Ishbosheth and his army attempted to coerce the people of Judah and compel them to recognize Ishbosheth, David and his supporters resisted this intrusion, though we have no evidence that David attempted to extend his authority over the other tribes—except as they might voluntarily choose to accept him as their king. This they finally did, at the end of seven and half years, and a grand coronation made him king over all Israel. His patient waiting for the Lord's time and the Lord's way evidently was very much better than any other course he could have pursued. The Lord's wisdom is always superior; though in the midst of their trials, his people, being unable to see the end from the beginning, may have too much confidence in their own schemes and methods and too little faith in the Lord.

The Lord's people of today should take well to heart this lesson of faith, obedience and patient waiting on the Lord. We, too, are waiting for a kingdom, and for the peace and blessing which the Lord has promised shall come therewith. We, too, see Philistines in the way, and rival brethren, who, though really the Lord's, do not see so clearly as we the Lord's program for the establishment of his kingdom. It is for us to wait patiently on the Lord, while he uses the wrath of man to praise him, and to make straignt the way of the Lord, and to usher in eventually his kingdom under more favorable conditions than would be possible if we were to attempt to act for ourselves, or in any manner or sense to hasten his arrangements.

The Golden Text is an excellent one, and applied to this lesson we see it illustrated in David's course. Although he was a man of war, courageous and aggressive toward the enemies of the Lord and of Israel, David was most emphatically a man of peace toward his brethren of all the tribes;—careful to treat them as brethren, and to do all in his power to maintain unity and brotherly love and friendship. Although misunderstood and persecuted by them for a time, he finally was appreciated and proclaimed king of all Israel, with the result that all the brethren, thus united by his wise counsel and conduct, did dwell together in unity, and Israel had peace and prosperity, whereas by a different course on David's part a fierce and long-lasting civil was might readily have been enkindled.

We are reminded, too, of the fact that it was the Lord's own brethren who persecuted him, but that, as the Apostle explains, "in ignorance they did it." We rejoice to know that when the Lord shall have fully established his kingdom, all who are the Lord's people, all desirous of being on the side of righteousness, will hail him gladly as their King; and that the unity and peace and blessing of that glorious Millennial age will far exceed anything that our minds can grasp or our tongues express. Like our Lord, let us seek to be peacemakers, and to dwell together with all the brethren in the unity of the spirit, in the bonds of peace. Let our activities, our combativeness, etc., be engaged against the great enemy and all the works of sin,—including those in our members, our own fallen flesh. We, and all the brethren, will thus find sufficient engagement for every combative element of our nature, in ways well pleasing to the Lord, and employment for every lovable and helpful quality we possess, in building one another up, and doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith.

THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THE DEAD

1 PET. 4:1-11.—SEPTEMBER 20.

"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess."—Eph. 5:18.

The Apostle's argument is that dead people cannot sin; and that the Lord's consecrated ones, having devoted themselves even unto death, already reckon themselves "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6: 11) We have become followers of him who, realizing the sinfulness of sin, and that the whole human family was hopelessly under its control, gave himself even unto death, that he might redeem us from sin and its wages—death. If we appreciate our Lord and his work, his love for righteousness, and his sacrifice on our behalf; and if we desire to be truly his disciples, followers in his footsteps, it will mean that we will "arm ourselves with the same mind" that he had—the same opposition to sin, the same determination to lay down our lives in opposition to it, and in endeavors to assist in delivering those who are under its control. Not that any sacrifice of ours could effect the cancellation of the divine sentence, but that our Lord's sacrifice, being quite sufficient to accomplish this, we are privileged to show our devotion to him and to the principles governing his conduct: the inducement being held out to us that those who suffer with him shall share also his glory, his kingdom, his immortality.

Those who have made such a consecration unto death, in opposition to sin, will certainly not commit sin *wilfully*, for to do so would prove that their wills had changed—that they were no longer begotten of the new will, the new mind, the holy Spirit or disposition, but had become alive again as the servants of sin. Such a course would prove that such persons had ceased to be new creatures, and the loss of this new life to them would mean the second death. But so long as they remain willingly faithful to their vows of fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, in his opposition to sin—so long as they remain thus reckonedly dead to sin and reckonedly alive as new creatures, they have no sin. As the Apostle John expresses it, "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him; . . . whosoever is born [begotten] of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; he cannot sin because he is born [begotten] of God."—1 John 3:6, 9.

The thought here is not that any of the Lord's people become perfect in the flesh, so that they never err in thought, word or deed. The thought is that the new *will* is counted the new creature, separate and distinct from the *flesh*, so that while the will, the heart, is fully loyal to the Lord, in opposition to sin, the flesh is reckoned dead to sin, and hence any of its weaknesses and imperfections which are unintentional, not assented to by the new will, the new creatures, are not counted by the Lord, who knows us not after the flesh, but after the spirit. Thus, as the Apostle Paul declares, "The righteousness of the Law *is fulfilled* in us who walk not after the flesh [desiring to serve it], but after the spirit [endeavoring to do the Lord's will]."

The "time past of our lives," referred to in vss. 3 and 4, was the time when we were natural men, before we became new creatures, begotten of the Lord's spirit. That time past,

and that past experience of life, sufficeth us—we want no more of it, we have found a better life. We would not return to the former condition of natural-mindedness and alienation from God under any consideration. The list of excesses mentioned by the Apostle—lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revelries, carousings and abominable idolatries—were not the same with all of us; and yet there is a certain amount of correspondency in every case. Some of the early Christians were lifted by the Lord's grace out of very deep degradation of mind and body, and some of the Lord's people of today have been similarly lifted from the depths of Satan and sin, while still others, never having been so deeply degraded, were not lifted from such great depths. However, all who have the new mind of full consecration to the Lord can realize a great change from the mind or disposition which was theirs naturally.

Even those born of Christian parents, who therefore were born on the plane of justification, realize that their natural hearts had more or less affinity for the things of sin, even including idolatries—idolizing themselves or others or money or fame or influence or whatnot. A change takes place in all, but the degree of change is necessarily marked by the degree of degradation preceding our consecration. How thankful some of us should be that in the Lord's providence we were born of Christian parents and under Christian influences! How careful all of the Lord's people should be that any children which they have brought into the world, or may yet bring, shall come under the most favorable influences to make them the more amenable to the "reasonable service" of a full consecration of their all to the Lord!

The idolatrous companions of those who once lived in sin doubtless spoke of the latter as hypocrites, when they turned from these things, becoming dead to them and alive toward the Lord and his service. Their disposition would be to attribute such a change to some ignoble motive. It would be beyond their comprehension that anyone should voluntarily make such a change, for truly they would say that the course was "unnatural"! Likewise, in our day, those who step out of Churchianity, with its forms of godliness without the power, with its social revelry, intoxication with the spirit of this world and of false doctrines (Rev. 17:2), and its idolatries of money, influence, etc., are considered peculiar people, and not infrequently their sanity is questioned. The natural man understandeth not why any should seek for more than that which would be outwardly respectable and honorable. The world knoweth us not, even as it knew not the Lord.—Rev. 18:3.

The fifth verse according to our Common Version seems to refer to those who speak evil, and to say that they will be obliged to give an account in the day of judgment—in the Millennial day, when they will be on trial. This is undoubtedly true. As our Lord declared, every act and word done in injury of the Lord and his faithful will receive a just recompense of reward—justly proportionate to the amount of their wilfulness in the matter. But there is another way of viewing this verse, equally true, viz., by connecting it with the preceding verse, so as to have it read, "Speaking evil of *you who shall give an account* to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead." This last thought seems more fully in accord with the entire testimony of the Word on the subject. It is we, the church, who are expecting shortly to give such an account. It is we who are being specially tried and tested during the present time, because to us the light and knowledge and opportunity have come in advance of the world. This is our trial time, and the Lord's judgment or decision with reference to who shall constitute the very elect, and respecting who shall be accounted worthy of joint-heirship with the Lord, is the very decision that is to be rendered.

The Apostle continues with this thought, saying that it is for this reason (because we who are dead to the world and alive toward God are being called out now, as the Lord's elect class, therefore) the Gospel is preached *to us who are* (thus) *dead*, so that while the world judges us as in the flesh, like all other men, the Lord may judge us as in the spirit, begotten to a newness of life. This is in exact accord with what we saw in the first two paragraphs of this lesson. The world discerns not that the new creatures are any different from other men; hence it wonders at their devotion, calls it folly or hypocrisy, and discerning the imperfections of the flesh may not at all times be able to see so great a difference between the new creatures and the world. But God, who knoweth the heart, and who has from the moment of our consecration counted the flesh as dead, and who charges nothing against us as new creatures, begotten spirit beings, except that which is *wilfully* wrong, is the One with whom we have to do, and in whose favor and love and promises we rejoice. God is "for us"! None can prevail against us; all things must work together for good to us, because we are his, because he has called us according to his purpose, because we are seeking to walk in his way, not *after* the flesh, but *after* the spirit.

The end of all present things is near. Present institutions, under the supervision of "the prince of this world" (Satan), and controlled largely by his spirit, must soon, according to the divine promise, give place to the new conditions of God's kingdom, when the great Redeemer shall take to himself his great power and reign—binding Satan and putting down all insubordination and everything contrary to the righteousness which is of God. We who so believe can look with great equanimity upon the changing conditions of this present time; and the evil-speaking of the world and its antagonism manifested toward us in various ways, because we are new creatures, walking after the spirit to the extent of our ability, need not alarm us, for greater is he who is on our part than all that be against us. Hence it behooves us to be sober-minded—to take his reasonable and proper view, which does not overlook the future to see the present, but rather overlooks the present to see the future, held up before us in the Lord's Word. It behooves us also to watch unto prayer, to remember that we are not of ourselves sufficient for these things, that "our sufficiency is of God."

"Above all things," urges the Apostle, these who are dead to the world, and misunderstood by the world, but alive toward God and accepted through Christ as God's sons (despite all the blemishes of the flesh), these should be fervent in love amongst themselves. Such as realize the true situation, such as are standing for the principles of righteousness and truth and loyalty to the Lord, and enduring hardness as good soldiers, must have a deeply sympathetic love for all others who, like themselves, are battling for the Lord, and for the same principles of right. Whoever has not a fervent (burning) love for his fellows has reason to question to what extent he is one with the Lord and with the little flock whose experiences the Apostle is here delineating.

True, there are some of the Lord's accepted ones whom he counts dead as respects the flesh and alive as respects their spirit, their new natures, who are less lovely naturally (in mind and body) than some who are of the world, less fallen naturally: but wherever the true love of the Lord prevails it will indeed cover a multitude of sins, a multitude of blemishes, a multitude of imperfections, in those whom it will recognize as fellow-pilgrims in "the narrow way," "brethren" of the one family of God. This proper love, the love of God, will enable those who possess it to consider one another from the divine standpoint, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, the heart, the intention.

Amongst those who are dead to the world and alive as new creatures, there should be a special exercise of hospitality, and that without grudging. It should be hearty, and not merely because the Lord commends and commands it. Hospitality, indeed, is, as the Apostle points out, an element of character which should be cultivated toward all men. We should "do good unto all men as we have opportunity, but especially to the household of faith." There are some who can recognize this principle of hospitality quite keenly, and who, if hospitality be denied them, will be inclined to berate the brethren for their lack of the proper spirit. Such and all should inquire of themselves to what extent they have ever exercised hospitality and generosity to others; and anyone who realizes that he has received more from the brethren than he has given them should feel ashamed, and should seek of the Lord wisdom, that he may know wherein is his weakness, that he has so far come short of the great privileges of the Lord's followers, all of whom are to be *givers* rather than receivers—except under special conditions of distress. But let none of us forget that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." Let each of us seek to enjoy the blessing which comes from a liberal interpretation of this word hospitality.

The Lord's grace and bounty are manifold; they come to us in numberless forms, in things both spiritual and temporal. Some of us may receive a larger number of these favors than others, but in that event the responsibility or stewardship is proportionately increased; and the Apostle urges (vs. 10) that we should seek to serve out to others whatever gifts we possess. He who waters others shall himself be watered. This principle applies to everything, both temporal and spiritual.

Still speaking of this church class, dead to the world, and judged by the world as though they were men, but alive toward God, and judged by God as new creatures, spirit beings merely sojourning in these fleshly bodies, as in a tent, and waiting in this wilderness condition to learn the lessons necessary before entering the land of promise, the heavenly Canaan, by sharing the first resurrection, the Apostle proceeds to point out that these, when they *speak*, should be as "God's oracles," absolutely truthful, wholly reliable. If they *serve* they should

do it with all the ability which they possess, recognizing that the ability is God-given as well as the talent. These exhortations to truth and faithfulness in utterance and service are applicable first of all to believers (the church) amongst ourselves, but applicable also to all with whom they come in contact. We may be evil reported of and slandered, but all who know us, who have dealings with us, should find from experience our loyalty to principle, our endeavor that the words of our mouths as well as the meditations of our hearts and the conduct of life should be pleasing to the Lord and an honor to his name and cause, that God may be glorified through Christ, to whom belongs the glory and the kingdom forever. His church alone, in the present time, recognizes fully and properly the right and dominion of the Lord as the King. We alone have the blessing that comes from this recognition and relationship, but we look forward with joy to the time when his kingdom shall be established amongst men; when the time shall come for which we are praying, "Thy kingdom come"; when the knowledge of the Lord shall be made to reach every creature, and when many shall come to know and to love and to obey him whom now we rejoice to honor as our Redeemer and King.

As is indicated by the Golden Text, this lesson was designed by those who selected it to be a temperance lesson. We have not dealt with it after the manner they intended, but according to the Apostle's meaning. It certainly is a total abstinence lesson in one sense of the word, viz., in the sense that the class who have become dead to sin and alive toward God will desire to abstain from "every appearance of evil," which certainly will include intemperance, concerning which the Lord's Word is very explicit, in declaring that "No drunkard shall enter into the kingdom of heaven."—1 Cor. 6:10.

"THE LORD IS MY LIGHT AND MY SALVATION"

PSALM 27:1.—SEPT. 27.

A review of the quarter is appointed for this date, and our caption is the Golden Text. The four characters brought to our attention by the lessons of the past quarter have been Samuel the Prophet, Saul—Israel's first king,—Jonathan, his son, and David, successor to the kingdom. Three of these were grand characters, but one of them ignoble—Saul. The contrast before us has been chiefly as between Saul and David. Both were of good character in many respects; the differences between them we may safely credit to the fact that the one early gave his heart to the Lord, and the other kept his to himself. The secret of David's greatness is the Golden Text of this lesson. The Lord was his light and salvation—guiding his heart and overruling his affairs for good. But we should never forget that David was not only a great and good man of himself, because he chose the Lord for his portion and was always loyal at heart to him, but additionally because the Lord chose David, whose name signifies beloved, to be a type of Christ, the well-beloved,—head and body.

The grand lesson of this quarter to spiritual Israel is reverence for the Lord, faith in him, courage, the result of that faith, and patient endurance, another fruit of the same. The members of the body of Christ cannot fail to be profited by studying closely and deeply the character of the man after God's own heart, and learning from his experiences;—always remembering, nevertheless, that King David belonged to the house of servants, that he lived at too early a date to belong to the house of sons, of which our Lord Jesus was the first-born and forerunner; that consequently David did not have the begetting of the holy Spirit, nor the privileges and advantages of the same; that he was not running in the race for the great prize, was not a member of the royal priesthood, consecrated to death.—Heb. 3:2, 5, 6; 11:40; Luke 7:28.

For these reasons, although drawing valuable lessons from David's experiences, we of this Gospel age, members of the house of sons (John 1:12) are not to regard David as our sample or pattern in consecrated living or self-sacrificing service. While we draw lessons from the experiences of David and other noble characters of the past, our patterns are Jesus and his apostles, whom we are to copy—walking in their footsteps in the narrow way of self-sacrifice even unto death.

We commend to all a careful reading of Psalm 27 entire. It is profitable, capable of an application to every member of the body of Christ, the church, the house of sons.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

BAPTISTS BOUND AS TRULY AS OTHERS

We quote from the Texas *Baptist-Herald* as follows:—

"Prof. M'Glothlin of the Louisville Seminary, in an address at Savannah on 'Ecclesiasticism,' spoke these timely words:

" 'Ecclesiasticism tends constantly to increase the amount of machinery and centralize it in the hands of the clergy. Now the whole tendency of the times, among most other denominations as well as the Baptists, is to magnify the importance of the layman in the denominational life. We delight to make him moderator of our associations, our State conventions and even the Southern Baptist Convention. We are beginning to put him at the head of our denominational colleges, and the only reason he does not play even a larger part in our church affairs is our inability to induce him to do so. There is no disposition among our preachers to usurp authority or even to retain what they have. They labor to bring forward the layman. No ecclesiasticism here.

" 'But what of the increase in machinery? Here we have a different tale to tell. *The early churches were the only Christian organizations so far as we know. They were wholly independent of each other*, having no connection except that which comes through unity in faith and practice. The same *was* true of the Baptist churches in America for nearly a century. The first Baptist church in America was founded in 1639 and the first Association in 1707. The movement to organize the churches into associations met with determined opposition, but the work progressed, and by the beginning of the 19th century there were few churches which still stood outside the associations. The chief motives to these organizations had been the desire to better resist the State churches, to secure doctrinal agreement and to prosecute local missionary work.

" 'With the 19th century came the great foreign mission movement and with it the need of larger organizations. In 1814 the first national organization, the present Missionary Union, was formed. Later two other national organizations, the Home Mission Society and the American Baptist Publication Society, were organized. As a result of this same movement, combined with the great educational movement, State organizations began to be formed about 1820. The present Baptist organization was completed by the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845. *All or nearly all, these organizations met with the most determined opposition on the ground that they were not scriptural* and endangered or destroyed the independence of the churches. It is not strange that there was fear. Never in the history of Christianity was there such rapid progress in organization as in the 138 years from 1707 to 1845. Baptists have existed in the United States for about 264 years, and it must be admitted that we have far more ecclesiastical machinery than the Christians had 264 years after the death of Christ. Out of the simple Baptist church at Rome has grown the great Roman Catholic church which encloses the world in its embrace! *Are we on the same road? We have gone at a very rapid pace so far; will we stop, or will the organizations go on increasing?* We have rapidly increased our organizations, but two things are to be observed which make the situation less serious than it at first appears. Before the year 294 A. D., infant baptism had been introduced and the churches had been greatly corrupted; and in the second place the local church had lost its significance and independence. We Baptists, with all our increase of machinery, have stood true to the apostolic conception of an independent church of regenerate people. The New Testament ideal is our ideal. And herein is our safety for the future.' "

* * *

We cannot agree with the editor of the *Baptist-Herald* that these words are *timely*. They are quite behind time. Our dear Baptist friends have already lost their *liberty* in ecclesiasticism. For all practical purposes they are now bound as much as the people of other denominations, but they do not realize it and love their chains. Is it asked, How so? We reply that the bondage came through the error of ministerial ordination. Instead of recognizing, as we do, that "all ye are brethren," and that all anointed with the holy spirit are anointed to preach,—each to the extent of his talents and

opportunities,—Baptists recognized, as additionally necessary, a human ordination. The preachers took this into their own hands, implying that the church was competent to express God's will in selecting its own pastor, but as "brethren" were so inferior that their commission or appointment or recognition of him would not do without a clerical sanction or ordination.

This *key* in the hands of Baptist ministers has made them the masters and lords of the Baptist church,—much to its injury. Under their Ministerial associations numerous independent congregations, such as the apostles organized, have been welded into a denomination which these ministers control—creed and all. How so? Because any church not a member of the Association would have no standing as a Baptist church. And if a member of the Association it can have no one for its minister unless the other ministers accept him. Hence, pastors must be chosen from the ministerial clique and must be acceptable personally and doctrinally to the other Baptist ministers.

The preachers, having all the vital power and authority, can, therefore, well afford to push forward their inferiors, the "*laymen*," to committees, chairmanships, etc. The preachers only reinforce their own power by securing the loyalty of the leading men of the denomination, financial and otherwise, at so cheap a price. Evidently the writer scents danger in the future, but just as evidently he rejoices in the Baptist bondage and hugs her chains as very precious. Baptist liberty is an empty boast—as meaningless and untrue as that other claim, that the early church sailed under the name Baptist. The church founded by our Lord and the apostles took no sectarian name. Baptists, as well as others, need to heed the Master's final command of Revelation 18:4.

ZIONISTS IN PERPLEXITY

At the last Congress of the Zionists the President of the Society submitted two important communications. One was from the British Government, proffering the Society land, etc., in East Africa under favorable conditions, similar to those enjoyed by Canada—the suzerainty of Great Britain being understood. The proposition was favorably considered by a majority of the Congress and a committee of nine was appointed to examine into the feasibility of accepting the proposition. However a goodly and influential minority stoutly opposed even the consideration of the question, declared that the Society's funds were secured with the understanding that they were for reëstablishing the Jews in Palestine and not elsewhere, and that they should object to the use of a single penny in other colonization schemes, no matter how roseate. They temporarily left the Convention as a mark of their strong sentiments on the subject.

The other important communication was from the Russian Government. It distinctly avowed sympathy with the Zionist movement as originally inaugurated, because it hoped that thus Russia might be relieved of its Jewish population and the troubles, disturbances, etc., connected therewith. It, however, as distinctly disavowed sympathy with the later development of Zionism into a national or political movement; because this had a disturbing effect on Jews living in Russia and tended to make them enemies of their home government and neighbors. The views of a Jewish writer and prominent Zionist are interesting, and follow:—

MR. ISRAEL ZANGWILL'S VIEWS

"Viewed merely on its prosaic side, Zionism is by no means a visionary scheme. The aggregation of Jews in Palestine is only a matter of time—already they form a third of its population—and it is better that they should be aggregated there under their own laws and religion and the mild suzerainty of the Sultan than under the semi-barbarous restrictions of Russia or Roumania, and exposed to recurrent popular outbreaks. True, Palestine is a ruined country, and the Jews are a broken people. But neither is beyond recuperation. Palestine needs a people; Israel needs a country. If, in regenerating the Holy Land, Israel could regenerate itself, how could the world be other than the gainer? In the solution of the problem of Asia, which has succeeded the problem of Africa, Israel might play no insignificant part. Already the colony of Richon le Zion has obtained a gold medal for its wines from the Paris Exposition—which is not prejudiced in the Jew's favor. We may be sure the spiritual wine of Judea would again pour forth likewise—that precious vintage which the world has drunk for so many centuries. And, as the scientific activities of the colonization societies would have paved the way for the pastoral and commercial future of Israel in its own country, so would the rabbinical sing-song in musty rooms prove to have been but the unconscious preparation of the ages for the Jerusalem university.

"But Palestine belongs to the Sultan, and the Sultan refuses to grant the coveted Judean charter, even for dangled millions. Is not this fatal? No; it matters as little as that the Zionists could not pay the millions if suddenly called upon. They have collected not two and a half million dollars. But there are millionaires enough to come to the rescue once the charter was dangled before the Zionists. It is not likely that the Rothschilds would see themselves ousted from their familiar headship in authority and well-doing. Nor would the millions left by Baron Hirsch be altogether withheld. And the Sultan's present refusal is equally unimportant, because a national policy is independent of transient moods and transient rulers. The only aspect that really matters is whether Israel's face be or be not set steadily Zionward—for decades and even for centuries. Much less turns on the Sultan's mind than on Dr. Herzl's. Will he lose patience? For leaders like Dr. Herzl are not born in every century."

* * *

It will be vain for Zionists to hope to establish an *independent* government in Palestine. None of the civilized nations would favor putting the Land of Promise wholly into their control; and if they did God would not favor it. Palestine will be "trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be filled full"—viz., October, 1914, A. D. By that time the heavenly kingdom will be in power and the ancient worthies—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the holy prophets—will be resurrected and constitute the earthly representatives of the spiritual and invisible kingdom of Christ and his bride—the Gospel church.

Then Israel will be saved from its blindness (Rom 11:26, 27); and God will "pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication" (Zech. 12-10); and this, their true conversion to the Lord and the truth, will be the start of the world's conversion (Rom 11:15), when "Many peoples shall come and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths."—Micah 4:2.

UNEASINESS IN GERMANY

The Kaiser has recently proposed an increase in the German army, already considered a heavy burden financially and otherwise. The press declare that there will be danger of a revolution if the matter be urged. German government bonds experienced a sharp decline immediately on the announcement.

The significance of this year's parliamentary elections in Germany cannot be fully appreciated without taking into consideration the fact that all men are not equal before the law in the Kaiser's Empire. Certain classes of voters have greater rights than others, and are permitted to cast two, three or more ballots, according to their rank or wealth. Needless to say, the privileged franchise holders are mostly adherents of the government and members of the conservative parties. The official returns showing that the Social Democrats polled 3,008,000 votes mean that they constitute more than one-half of the total number of electors in Germany, and that under a "one-man-one-vote" system they would sweep everything before them. They have gained 900,000 recruits since 1899 and their ultimate control of the Reichstag is a certainty. The Kaiser's enmity seems to help them. He will be forced to change his attitude or assume a dictatorship. He affects to treat the matter lightly, as one of chance, which may be reversed at the next election.

1903—GENERAL CONVENTIONS REPORT—1903

We have had three splendid General Conventions this year, and each of them very successful in all respects. The first one, on April 4, 5, was in the South, where the "truth people" are much less numerous than in other quarters of our land. It was held in Atlanta, Ga., which for many reasons may be styled the principal city of those parts. The gathering of friends was estimated at 150, while the meeting advertised to the public had an estimated attendance of 450. Nineteen symbolized their consecration by water immersion. The listed speakers were Brothers Stevens and Wilbor, representatives of the Atlanta Church, Pilgrim Harrison and Pastor Russell.

The spiritual power of the Convention was great and we trust still abides in those who attended, and extends to their home-comrades who could not attend. The sentiments of the majority, we believe, were voiced by one old brother who boarded the train on which the writer departed. Shaking our hand warmly he said, "Brother Russell, I would not take a thousand dollars for the good I have received from this Convention;—and I am only a poor man, too." He is a mountain farmer who knows well what it means to combat the

thorns and thistles and to eat his bread by the sweat of his face; yet he prized the spiritual blessings above all compare because of such were his treasures—heavenly.

THE DENVER CONVENTION

The second Convention, at Denver, Colo., on July 10-12, was central to a large district not previously favored with convention privileges. The friends in attendance were chiefly of Colorado, and from California, Nebraska, Dakota, Iowa, Kansas, Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Utah, Indian Territory, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio and numbered about 350 earnest, zealous brethren and sisters, in about equal proportions. Thirty-six availed themselves of the opportunity offered and symbolized their burial into Christ's death by immersion in water.

The principal public service was attended by about 900, and it is to be hoped that our Master's name and cause were honored and blessed by the grand seasons of refreshing here enjoyed. The listed speakers were Brother Hall of the local congregation, Pilgrims Williamson, Draper, Barton, Howel and Pastor Russell. "It is good to be here," seemed the general sentiment of all in attendance. Not by any means the least important of its sessions were the testimony meetings and the final love feast, at which many eyes were filled with tears as the company sang,

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

All seemed to have in mind the great Conventions of the future which the Apostle designates "The general assembly and church of the firstborns," in which we hope to participate and which will not break up forever. What a hope,—forever with the Lord and those who are his!

THE TORONTO CONVENTION

The last Convention of the season has just closed at Toronto, Canada,—Sept. 5-7. We surely had a blessed season of spiritual refreshment. Many said, "This is the grandest we have ever had!" Yes! this is always the sentiment at every convention, and it is really difficult to determine superiority when everything is so soul-satisfying and heart-uplifting. The listed speakers were Bro. Stovel of the Toronto church and Pilgrims VanAmburgh, Hay, Harrison, McPhail, Barton, Streeter, Samson and Pastor Russell; but many others were heard from effectively in the testimony meetings which continue to be amongst the most effective sessions of all conventions.

The attendance was chiefly Canadian, and from New York, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois and Pennsylvania; the latter being the most prominent numerically. The number of "truth people" was estimated at 800, while the attendance at the two public gatherings averaged about 1,800 each—some estimating the number much higher. At the baptism service fifty-eight symbolized their burial into death with our Lord, and it surely was a solemn funereal occasion, yet one in which all rejoiced, remembering the promise, "If we be dead with him we shall also live with him." (2 Tim. 2:11) The concluding session was a love feast long to be remembered. In some respects surely this last Convention deserves to rank chief of all conventions thus far held under the auspices of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Central to a large population and to the homes of a large number of the interested, the attendance of the church and the public was larger than at any previous convention. The attraction to the people of Toronto was thorough advertising and the best public auditorium.

The generous arrangements connected with these conventions deserves a word of appreciation. The brethren of the entertaining churches recognized the fact that hundreds of the Lord's brethren were coming at considerable cost, and concluded that no reasonable expense should be spared to make their stay pleasant and spiritually profitable. It is safe to say that the friends of the entertaining church spent *pro rata* as much or more time and money than did those who came to them long distances. However, all was so cheerfully and heartily done, "as unto the Lord," that they evidently shared the great blessings of the conventions also, proportionately.

NEXT YEAR'S CONVENTIONS

It is too early to decide upon these definitely, but as the Grand Army Encampment will secure special railroad rates to Boston, and the World's Fair will probably secure special rates to St. Louis, these two cities will probably have next year's General Conventions if the churches at each desire this arrangement.

"CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY"

COLOSSIANS 1:27.

Language is but a medium for the communication of thought, and words are but symbols of ideas. When words are so framed in sentences as to express an impossibility or an absurdity, when considered literally, but do forcibly illustrate a known truth when symbolically interpreted, we instinctively recognize the figure, and are instructed by it. In this way many of the deep things of God—the spiritual things—are expressed to us, since they are often forcibly illustrated by things familiar to us on the natural plane. Thus for instance, the resurrection, both natural and spiritual, finds an illustration in the processes of vegetation (1 Cor. 15:35-38); and the processes of the beginning, development and final perfecting of the spiritual sons of God find a remarkable illustration in the begetting, quickening and birth of the natural man. (James 1:18; Eph. 2:1; John 3:3) But if, when we read these symbols or illustrations of spiritual things, we pervert and dishonor our God-given reason by accepting palpable absurdities as their interpretation, we deceive ourselves, and in so doing are not blameless. In parables and dark, symbolic sayings our Lord opened his mouth and taught his disciples, expecting them to use their common sense in either interpreting them themselves, or in judging of the correctness of any interpretation offered by others as they should become meat in due season. And when on one occasion, instead of using their brains to draw from it the implied lesson, the disciples asked for the interpretation of a parable, Jesus suggestively and reprovingly replied, "How then will ye know all parables?" (Mark 4:13) He would have us think, consider and put our God-given mental faculties to their legitimate use.

Bearing in mind these wholesome reflections, together with the fact that the Scriptures abound in these symbolic expressions of truth, let us consider the Apostle's meaning when he speaks of "Christ in you, the hope of glory." He uses the same figure again in his letter to the Galatians (Gal. 4:19), saying, "My children, whom I am bearing again, till Christ be formed in you," etc. Here the Apostle is likening his care and labor and endurance for those who had been begotten by the truth to the new nature, to the physical endurance of a mother in nourishing and sustaining the germ of human life until the new human creature is formed and able to appropriate for itself the life-sustaining elements of nature, independent of her life. So the Apostle sought to nourish and sustain those germs of spiritual being with his own spiritual life until, apart from his personal work and influence, they would be able to appropriate for themselves the God-given elements of spiritual life contained in the Word of truth;—until the Christ-character should be definitely formed in them.

In no other reasonable sense could the Apostle bear those Galatian Christians; and in no other reasonable sense could Christ be formed in them, or in us. The thought is that every true child of God must have a definite individual Christian character which is not dependent for its existence upon the spiritual life of any other Christian. He must from the Word of truth, proclaimed and exemplified by other Christians, draw those principles of life, etc., which give him an established character, a spiritual individuality of his own. So positive and definite should be the spiritual individuality of every one, that, should even the beloved brother or sister whose spiritual life first nourished ours and brought us forward to completeness of character fall away (which the Apostle shows is not impossible—Heb. 6:4-6; Gal. 1:8), we would still live, being able to appropriate for ourselves the spirit of truth.

Paul feared, and had reason to fear, that the Galatian Christians had not yet come to this condition of established character—that the Christ-life was not yet definitely formed in them. He said, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain" (Gal. 4:11); for already they were giving heed to seducing teachers and departing from the faith, showing that they were not established in the truth, and consequently not established in the spirit of the truth which is the spirit of Christ, and, hence, that Christ was not yet formed in them.—Verse 19.

Alas, how often we see among those who bear the name of Christ, and who have truly received the spirit of adoption as sons of God, that Christ is not yet formed in them! that they have not yet reached that degree of development which manifests a distinct spiritual individuality! They depend largely upon the spiritual life of others, and if their spiritual life declines, these dependent ones suffer a similar decline; if

they go into error, these follow, as did many of those Galatian Christians to whom Paul wrote. How is it, beloved, in your several cases? Apply the question to yourselves—Is Christ formed in you so fully that none of these things move you? that, however they may grieve you at heart, they cannot affect your spiritual life? This is what it is to have "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

A cloak of mystery and superstition has been thrown around this expression of the Apostle, evidently by the great adversary of the truth and the church, to the effect that in some secret way, known only to the initiated, Christ personally comes into the consecrated soul and uses that soul simply as a machine; and that, consequently, the machine is about infallible, because Christ is using it; that for them to speak, or think, or act, or interpret the Scriptures, is for Christ to do it, in whose hands they are merely the passive agents. With this idea they generally go further, and claim that Christ personally talks with them and teaches them independently of his Word; and some go so far as to claim that they have visions and special revelations from the Lord. Some speak of this presence as Christ; some as the holy Spirit; and some speak of them interchangeably.

While there is a semblance of truth in all this, and while we remember that Jesus said, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them . . . . shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him; . . . . and we will come unto him and make our abode with him" (John 14:21, 23), it is true that a more serious error could scarcely be entertained than this idea of personal infallibility because of the supposed mysterious presence of another being within.

Notice that this promise of the abiding presence of the Father and the Son is to those who *have* and *keep* the commandments of the Lord Jesus. Those, therefore, who ignore the Word of the Lord and have not his commandments—who do not know what they are, and hence cannot keep them, but who hearken to the voice of their own imaginations and note all the changing states of their own feelings, mistaking them for the voice of the Lord, and follow the impressions arising from this source, instead of the commandments or teachings of the Lord—are quite mistaken in claiming this promise. Under their delusion they are following another spirit than the spirit of truth; and unless recovered from the snare they must inevitably plunge deeper and deeper into superstition and error.

The first difficulty we meet in attempting to dispel this delusion from the minds of those infatuated with it, is the claim that this is a higher attainment in the spiritual life, up to which we have not yet measured. If the testimony of the Scriptures bearing on the subject is brought forward they say, "Oh, I see you have the head-knowledge, but you have not the Spirit, you have not Christ in you." They then proceed to tell how Christ is in them, and that he is "teaching them wonderful things," which we shortly discover to be quite out of harmony with the Word of God. The case is indeed a sad one when all Scripture testimony contrary to their belief is set aside with claims of superior revelations of Christ or the holy Spirit which other children of God do not enjoy, and that Christ personally dwells in them, etc., etc.

Who but these deceived ones cannot see that, if their theory be true—if God talks with them and answers all their queries aside from his written Word, the Bible, through mental inspiration, or by dreams, or by audible sound—then the Bible is to such a useless book, and time spent in its study is so much time wasted. Who would "search the Scriptures" as for hid treasures, as the Lord enjoined and as all the apostles searched, if they could shut their eyes, or kneel, and have God make a special revelation to them, respecting the information desired. Surely any sensible person would prefer a special revelation on a subject, rather than to spend days and months and years examining and comparing the words of our Lord and the apostles with those of the prophets and the Book of Revelation ("searching what or what manner of time the spirit did signify"), if they could ask and have an inspired and infallible answer in a moment. None of God's consecrated ones should be thus misled of the adversary. It is the stepping-stone to pride and every evil work;—to *pride*, because those who are thus deceived soon feel themselves honored of God above the apostles, who even in conference judged of the mind of the Lord as read in his Word and in his providential leadings in harmony with his Word (Acts 15:12-15); to *every evil work*, in that those thus puffed up fancy themselves infallible, and separated from the anchor of truth, the Bible, Satan can soon lead them rapidly into the outer darkness of the world, or into yet darker delusions.

But the testimony of the Scriptures is quite contrary to this vaunting spirit. Paul says, "Know ye not . . . . that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" and then he exhorts that we examine ourselves whether we be in the faith, or whether we have rejected the faith and thus become reprobates—no longer acceptable to God. (2 Cor. 13:5) Every *true* child of God has respect to the commandments of God: he searches the Scriptures that he may know them, and is not left in ignorance of them; and, learning them, he endeavors to keep them, and the abiding presence of the Father and the Son is with all such so long as they continue to hold and to keep (obey) his commandments—to hold the truth in righteousness.

To have the truth and to keep it is not merely to accept it on the recommendation of some friend, and because it gives some comfort and costs nothing, and to hold it until some other presumed friend dazzles the unsettled mind with some fanciful theory. The promise of the abiding presence of the Father and the Son is not to such. Christ is not in them; Christ is in the humble and sincere ones. He and the Father love and abide with them.

But how? To illustrate—a friend accompanying another to a railway station said, as he was about to board the train, "Remember, I will be with you all the way." He meant that his thoughts would be with his friend and that he would be concerned for his welfare, etc. In a similar, and yet in a fuller and broader sense, the Lord is ever present with his people. He is always thinking of us, looking out for our interests, guarding us in danger, providing for us in temporal and spiritual things, reading our hearts, marking every impulse of loving devotion to him, shaping the influences around us for our discipline and refining, and hearkening to our faintest call for aid or sympathy or fellowship with him. He is never for a moment off guard, whether we call to him in the busy noon hours or in the silent watches of the night. And not only is the Lord Jesus thus present, but the Father also. How blessed the realization of such abiding faithfulness! And no real child of God is devoid of this evidence of his adoption. Sometimes it is more manifest than at others; as, for instance, when some special trial of faith or patience or endurance necessitates the special call for special help, and forthwith comes the grace sufficient with a precious realization of its loving source. Thus

> "E'en sorrow, touched by heaven, grows bright
> With more than rapture's ray,
> As darkness shows us worlds of light
> We never saw by day."

Every true child of God has these precious evidences of sonship, and the roughest places in his pathway are so illuminated with divine grace that they become the brightest, and memory continues to refer to them with thankfulness; and faith and hope and love grow strong and inspiring.

Our Lord always links the progress and development of our spiritual life with our receiving and obeying the truth, and every child of God should beware of that teaching which claims to be in advance of the Word, and that Christ or the holy Spirit speaks to such advanced Christians independently of the Word. The snare is a most dangerous one. It cultivates spiritual pride and boastfulness, and render powerless the warnings and expostulations of the sacred Scriptures because the deluded ones think they have a higher teacher dwelling in them. And Satan, taking advantage of the delusion, leads them captive at his will.

These symbolic expressions of the Scriptures must be interpreted as symbols, and to force any unreasonable interpretation upon them manifests a culpable wilfulness in disregarding the divinely appointed laws of our mind, and the result is self-deception. When we read, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1 Jno. 4:16), the only reasonable interpretation is that we dwell in the love and favor, and in the spirit or disposition of God; and that his spirit or disposition dwells in us. Thus God by his indwelling spirit works in us to will and to do his good pleasure (Phil. 2:13); and we are reckoned as not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if the spirit of God dwells in us.—Rom. 8:8, 9.

Let us endeavor to have more and more of the mind, the spirit of God—to have his Word abide in us richly (John 15:7; Col. 3:16)—to have and to keep his commandments, that the abiding presence of the Father and the Son may be with us; and that, realizing that the Christ-character and life are definitely formed in us, the hope of glory may be ours; for our Lord said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21)

How careful then should we be in seeking both to know and to do the will of God. Many indeed will come forth with the plea of their wonderful works, hoping to be admitted into the kingdom, but only those will be recognized who have done the will of the Lord, and who have no theories or works of their own whereof to boast.

A PROPER SEEKING OF DIVINE FAVOR

2 SAM. 6:1-12.—OCTOBER 4.

"Blessed are they that dwell in thy house."—Psa. 84:4.

After David had been voluntarily chosen king of all the tribes of Israel, not as a result of his conquest, but as a result of his patient waiting for the Lord's time to put him into the position of king, he took possession of Jerusalem and made it the capital city of the kingdom. Then followed wars with the Philistines, who again sought to invade the land of Israel. In these wars, under the Lord's blessing, the Israelites were successful. It was after seven years had passed under such conditions—after the kingdom of Israel had become quite settled, and was not likely to be molested by enemies—that the scene of this lesson opens. King David, at this time about forty-four years of age, recognized the fact that religious matters had been at a low ebb in the nation for many years, and that the Lord having now blessed them by reuniting them and giving them peace, an appropriate time had come to do what he could in the way of reviving the religious sentiments of the people. His own heart ever loyal to the Lord, he desired that others should more fully appreciate the Lord as their light and their salvation. So it is with all who truly reverence the Lord and trust in him; they are desirous of telling their joys abroad, and helping others into the same condition of peace and rest in the Lord.

The Ark of the Covenant, it will be remembered, was the chief article of furniture in the Tabernacle service which the Lord instituted at the hand of Moses in the wilderness. We have no certain knowledge of the regularity of the Tabernacle worship during the period from Joshua to date. Quite probably the services were maintained with more or less regularity. It is possible that since the Ark was the chief center of interest in connection with that service, its movements, etc., may have included the movement of the other articles of furniture of the Tabernacle, its boards, curtains, lamp, table, altars, etc.

Shortly after Israel entered Palestine Joshua located the Ark at Shiloh, twenty miles north of Jerusalem. (Josh. 18:1) That it was still there at the close of the period of the Judges, and while Samuel lived with Eli, is shown by 1 Sam. 1:3. The sons of Eli took the Ark with them into battle against the Philistines, thus evidencing their faith in the divine institutions, although their lives were corrupt; but as a result of this misuse of the Ark, the Lord permitted it to be captured by the Philistines. However, while they possessed it a curse seemed to accompany it. In the temple of their god, Dagon, his image fell down before the Ark, and the people of the cities in which it was located were afflicted with plague. The Philistines were glad to get rid of the Ark, and loading it upon a cart started the oxen in the direction of the Israelites. From the time of its return the Ark was in the custody of Abinadab, the priest, and his sons, one of whom was Uzzah. The Ark had thus been with the house of Abinadab in the hill Gibeah and Kirjath-jearim, otherwise called Baale, seventy years.

Any religious movement amongst the Jews must necessarily center in and about the Ark of the Covenant, for it was the symbol of the Lord's presence and of his mercy and grace toward them as a people. We remember that when in its place in the Most Holy of the Tabernacle a bright light, called the Shekinah glory, represented the Lord's presence between the two Cherubim of its golden lid which lid was called the Mercy Seat, because upon it the blood of atonement was sprinkled each year, which covered the sins of that people for a year, and was repeated year by year continually, as a foreshadowing type of the blood of Christ, by which the real atonement is made. In the box under this lid or Mercy Seat was the golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded and the two Tables of the Law, symbolizing the gracious arrangements and promises of the Almighty to his people. Spiritual Israel, thank God, has inherited the realities which were thus typified. Christ is the Ark of the Covenant. In him the law has full satisfaction. In him is vested the priestly office, represented by Aaron's rod, and in him is provided the heavenly manna. All these things are made ours by the Mercy Seat, and we have access to and are accepted before the Mercy Seat as members of the High Priest's body, by virtue of the blood of atonement shed by our Redeemer as a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

King David realized that the Ark of the Lord, representing his presence, should be in the capital city of the nation, making it the city of the great King, and directing the minds of Israel, not only to their earthly king and his laws and regulations, but through him to the heavenly King whom he represented. To have this event notable—to arouse the religious sentiments of the whole people—the king realized that they must all to some extent participate in the movement, and hence be gathered from all quarters thirty thousand of the chief men of the nation—not only its military representatives, but the heads of the tribes. There is a good lesson here for all spiritual Israelites who have any prominence in the carrying forward of religious work. It is not sufficient that a leader, a representative, shall attempt some prominent service for the Lord and for the truth. It is wiser, better every way, that all of the Lord's people be invited to join directly or representatively in any prominent matter connected with the Lord's service. Even in the affairs of a small congregation it will be found disadvantageous to have one person do all the speaking, all the leading, all the serving. Far better, far wiser is it, far more in harmony with the Scriptural direction, that each should endeavor to take a part in the service, and be encouraged so to do along the lines of his natural talents and in proportion as he shall be found humble, faithful and helpful.

The holy joy and rejoicing of the journey with the Ark from Kirjath-jearim toward Jerusalem was suddenly interrupted by the jolt of the cart, which Uzzah, who had it in charge, feared would overthrow it. When he put forth his hand to steady the Ark he was smitten dead for his error. Consternation took the place of rejoicing. The thirty thousand who had come together specially to honor the Lord, and David himself also, were alarmed. Fear fell upon all, and David at once determined that this was either a mark of divine disfavor concerning the bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem, or that increasingly disastrous experiences might come to him and to the city by reason of the presence of the Ark. All were in fear, and the question now was, what to do with the holy oracle. A courageous man of the tribe of Levi, Obed-edom, was willing to receive the emblem of the Lord Jehovah's presence into his premises—probably the Ark was set up with the Tabernacle, etc., in his yard or court or appropriate place.

"David was displeased because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzzah"—not displeased with the Lord, we may be sure, from what we know of the man, for David's reverence for the Lord and his confidence in his righteous dealings are clearly manifested in all of his writings. We may properly understand this to mean, then, that David was displeased with his former determination—to take the Ark to Jerusalem; displeased that his good intentions respecting the revival of religion and the honoring of the Lord had thus gone astray through a lack of particularity on his own part and on the part of the priests who had charge of the movement in that they did not obey the direct and explicit instructions of the Lord concerning the manner in which this sacred emblem of his presence should be moved. See Num. 4:15; 7:9, where it is specified that the Ark was to be carried upon the shoulders of the Levites by poles running through certain rings arranged for the purpose. That this was David's attitude of mind is evident upon the reading of the ninth verse: "David was afraid of the Lord that day, and said, How shall the Ark of the Lord come to me?" We can imagine the disappointment and chagrin, not only of David, but also of the thirty thousand representative Israelites, when they scattered to their homes, disappointed respecting their good intentions, which apparently had not been fully approved by the Lord.

The statement that "the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah" is not to be understood to signify violent passion on the Lord's part, but evidently is an accommodated expression to bring down to human comprehension the fact that the Lord was displeased with the action of Uzzah, and thought proper to punish him for his neglect. Quite possibly long association with the Ark had bred in Uzzah a familiarity and loss of respect for it as representative of God; and his open violation of the divine regulation on the highway, and in the sight of the representatives of all Israel, would have brought the divine commands and threatenings respecting the Ark and the various holy things of the Tabernacle into disrespect. The Lord resented this in the interest of his people, and incidentally took the opportunity to teach all Israel, through their representatives there assembled, a great lesson

on the propriety of reverence for the Lord and for the particularities of his commands.

The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Whoever has not learned this primary lesson in reverence has not made a proper start in his worship and service. Unless he learns this lesson he is not likely to accomplish anything that will be pleasing to the Lord—he is apt to be a stumbling-block, rather than an assistance in the Lord's service. Indeed, those who are the Lord's consecrated people, and who have been privileged to handle holy things, and to enter into the Most Holy by the blood of Jesus, approaching the throne of the heavenly grace in prayer, have continual need to remember the appropriateness of reverence as they approach the Lord or engage in any service for him. All such should learn from this lesson how they touch holy things, and to do so according to the divine direction and not otherwise. The poet has noticed this tendency of some to "rush in where angels fear to tread." Such irreverence sometimes manifests itself conspicuously in prayer, where the one who should be a worshiper, overflowing with thanksgiving for mercies received, undertakes to give direction to the great King of kings concerning the management of his work far and near and in all particulars. The Lord does not smite down such today, and make public examples of them for their irreverence, but we may be sure that, as the Apostle says, such petitions will receive no consideration of the Lord. (James 1:7) A lesson in this matter to us is that obedience is better than sacrifice. The carrying of the Ark upon the shoulders of the four Levites might not have been as majestic a procedure as the one attempted with the cart; it would nevertheless have been more pleasing to the Lord, because it was, according to his directions. Let us apply this lesson carefully, and see to it that we not only desire to do the Lord's will, but that we so desire to do it in his way that we will give close attention thereto, hearkening to the statements of his Word, or, as the prophet expresses it, let us be amongst those who tremble at his Word—who are extremely careful to note and particularly follow the Word of the Lord in every matter. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I come to make up my jewels."

To those who discern the Scriptural teaching that death is the cessation of life, and not an entrance into life more abundant, there will be no need to explain that Uzzah's conduct not only justified the Lord in making him an example before the nation, instructing the whole people in reverence, but also that no injury was done to Uzzah's eternal future. He lived before the redemption price had been paid, and before any door to eternal life had been opened. He was one member of the human family for hich Christ Jesus our Lord gave his life a ransom. As a consequence, he will be one member of the human family who shall ultimately hear the voice of the Son of man and come forth from the sleep of death—to have it testified to him, in that his "due time," that God has been gracious to our entire race, and has redeemed us with the precious blood. (1 Tim. 2:4-6) It is to those who have gotten the mistaken idea which ignores the resurrection and claims that there are no dead to be resurrected, but that the dead are more alive than they ever were before, and who, therefore, think of Uzzah as being dropped immediately into the hands of devils for eternal torture—it is to these that this narrative seems perplexing and unjustly severe. Thank God for the clearer light now shining upon his character and plan!

During the three months that the Ark was at the home of Obed-edom the Lord's blessing was specially with the family, to such a degree that their neighbors took knowledge of it, and the matter eventually reached the attention of the king. We think it not unreasonable to assume that there was something in the character of Obed-edom, and the conduct of his home, in his reverence for the Lord and his confidence in him, that had to do with the blessing accompanying the possession of the Ark; because we have no record of any special blessing coming to the house of Abinadab during the seventy years that the Ark remained there. We might draw a lesson from this applicable to spiritual Israel. The Bible in some respects represents the Lord to us, as the Ark represented him to natural Israel. To it we go for the settlement of our questions. From it we hear the message of the Lord speaking peace to our souls, the forgiveness of sins, etc. The Bible has been in many homes in Christendom for more than seventy years without bringing any special blessing to those homes; yet to some even in a few months it has brought inestimable favors. What is the difference? We reply that very much depends upon the genuineness of the Israelite and the degree of reverence he has for the Lord and his Word and his carefulness to consult that Word in respect to all his affairs, and the affairs of his home. Those who have the blessing of the Lord's Word and especially those who have any light upon its pages in this dawning of the Millennial morning, if they are not receiving great blessing from it in their own hearts, peace, joy, comfort, courage, strength, and finding such blessings also upon the members of their households, have reason to inquire to what extent they are responsible for their failure to profit thus.

Hearing of the blessings of the Lord upon the home of Obed-edom, King David took fresh courage, and realized that these different experiences of Uzzah and Obed-edom taught the lesson that those who reverently and carefully sought to know and to do the will of the Lord would have a blessing in proportion to their nearness to him, while the careless and the irreverent only need be in fear. Again the king assembled the representatives of the nation from all quarters, the chief men of the tribe and the chief representatives of the army, etc., and apparently this day of the bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem was the most joyful and the most notable day in David's entire experience. See an account of this in 1 Chron. 15, 16. On this occasion care was taken to follow the divine direction, and the Ark was borne on the shoulders of the Levites, frequent stoppages being made, during which sacrifices were offered to the Lord.

On the whole we discern that the Lord's dealing in this matter taught David and all Israel a great lesson, and was very advantageous to the nation as a whole. Thus it is with all the corrections in righteousness which the Lord may at any time give to those who are truly his; rightly received they will bring forth peaceable fruits of righteousness, reverence and obedience.

KING DAVID'S REPENTANCE

PSALM 51:1-17.—OCTOBER 18.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Create in me a clean heart, O God."*

Prosperity did not work to King David's personal advantage. After years of phenomenal success under the Lord's blessing, when his kingdom was mighty and his name honorable, and the necessity for his personal participation in wars was passed, and his heart had begun to gravitate towards earthly pleasures and was less zealous for the Lord and the law than at first, the king fell into very grievous sins, which appear all the more black in contrast with the high moral character shown by him in his earlier life, when he was the man after God's own heart. The story of his sins, how he became enamored of Bathsheba and committed adultery with her, and subsequently, to shield himself, caused her husband Uriah to be placed in the forefront of the battle that he might be killed by the enemy, involving the loss of several other lives as well, is told in the Scriptures in a most straightforward manner, without the slightest effort to condone the king's wrong-doing. No excuses are offered in connection with the account; the full weight of these awful crimes is laid directly on the king's head. Whatever excuses may be offered on his behalf must come from the reader of the account. We may suggest some thoughts along this line. In that day the kings of the world exercised a despotic authority, and it was a theory among the people that the king could do no wrong—that whatever he pleased to do was proper to him because of his high position as the head and ruler of the nation. We could in no sense of the word agree with such a thought. Nevertheless we can reasonably suppose that a sentiment so general would have more or less influence upon the mind of the king. He who respected Saul's life, because he was the Lord's anointed, may have to some extent fallen into the misconception that his own anointing by the Lord relieved him in some degree from the responsibilities resting upon others of his nation.

For about two years after these crimes were committed the king sought to stifle his conscience, and to consider that he was only using kingly liberties in what he had done. Nevertheless his conscience smote him, and he felt an alienation from God and a condemnation under his law such as he would not have felt had he been of a different stamp of character. God was not hasty in reproving him, either. He allowed him to have a full taste of heart bitterness—allowed him to feel the darkness of soul, absence of joy, resulting from the cloud which had come between him and the Lord. It was at the appropriate time, after David had passed through secret

mournings and travailings of the soul, that the Lord sent him a reproof through Nathan the prophet to bring the whole matter clearly before his mind. Nathan, under the figure of a parable, excited the king's sympathies and declaration of a very severe judgment—a death sentence—against the person offending, and then the Prophet brought home to him the lesson saying, "Thou art the man!"

King David, we are to remember, did not belong to the spiritual house of sons, and hence had a far less clear view of such matters than that which would properly belong to every member of the house of sons, begotten of the spirit and "taught of God." We are not, therefore, to expect to draw a lesson to ourselves along similar lines. Rather we or the spiritual house, under the clearer conceptions of the divine will, are to remember the higher interpretation of adultery and murder set forth in the New Testament: that whoever desires adultery, and is merely restrained from it by outward circumstances or fears, is really an adulterer in his heart (Matt. 5:28); that he that is angry with his brother, he who hates his brother, is a murderer—because the spirit of anger is that which, unrestrained, would lead to murder (Matt 5:22); and that the person who covets the things of another and is merely restrained from taking them for lack of opportunity or fear of consequence, is at heart a thief. If these principles be applied by the new creation in the examination of their hearts, it is entirely probable that some of the "house of sons" today may find themselves very near the plane of King David as respects sin, and so viewing matters they will exercise proportionately greater compassion in their judgment of the royal transgressor. Such, too, will find great consolation in the Lord's compassion, provided they are exercised in respect to their offences as David was concerning his. "There is compassion with thee that thou mightest be feared," is the prophet's expression. If God were wanting in compassion, as are many of our fellow creatures, there would be nothing to hope for under such circumstances. It is when we realize that there is forgiveness with the Lord for all who are penitent at heart, and who, therefore, give evidence that their sins are not wilful, but rather of the weakness of heredity and under the pressure of blinding temptations, that we are moved to repentance by a hope for better things.

The 51st Psalm is generally recognized as being the one in which the Psalmist expresses to God his contrition for his sins, and the fact that it is dedicated to the Chief Musician implies that it was the king's intention that it, in common with other of the Psalms, should be chanted in the Tabernacle services, for which he had set apart a large number of singers. We thus perceive that if the sin was flagrant and gross, the atonement which the king endeavored to make was a most public one. Probably many of the nation had felt more or less of the king's condemnation, and its influence must have been very injurious; and now in his public view of it as sin, and his prayer for divine forgiveness, the king would undo so far as possible not only the injury which he had inflicted upon his own conscience, and which as a cloud hung between the Lord and him, but he would undo also the evil influences as respects the conscience of the nation—on the subjects of adultery and murder.

Here again we see why David was described as a man after God's own heart. His sins were not pleasant to God—quite the reverse; but the after appreciation of the enormity of the sins and the hearty repentance therefor to the Lord, and the desire to be cleansed from every evil way, were pleasing to the Lord. Here we have an illustration of how all things may work together for good to those who love God. By reason of his heart-loyalty to the Lord, and the principles of righteousness, even these terrible sins resulted in bringing a great blessing to David's own heart—humbling him—giving him an appreciation of his weakness and littleness, and of his need to abide close to the Lord, if he would have the Lord's fellowship and compassion and be safe from the temptations of his own fallen flesh. So, too, with the new creation. How many of them have realized profitable lessons and blessings out of some of their stumblings—not that the stumblings were good nor of the Lord, but that the Lord was able to overrule such circumstances for good to those who are of the proper mind—rightly exercised by them to repentance and reformation.

The first three verses of the Psalm express David's appreciation of his sin and his trust in the Lord, without any attempt to apologize for his shortcomings. He trusted to the Lord to make whatever allowances could be made and merely appealed to his great "loving-kindness." In calling to mind the multitude of God's tender mercies in the past, he expressed faith and trust that in some way the Lord could blot out these grievous transgressions and forgive them. The Lord had not yet clearly defined the way in which he could be just and yet be the justifier of sinners. Only vaguely through the shadows of the day of atonement sacrifices had he intimated that he had some way of his own by which in due time the guilty but repentant ones might be cleansed. David grasped the thought of mercy as understood in the types and shadows of the law, and much more may we of the house of sons grasp the thought of our Father's forgiveness when we see that it is exercised towards us by the Lord Jesus Christ, who already has given himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, and whose sacrifice has been accepted of the Father,—as manifested by our Lord's resurrection from the dead, and by the descent of the holy Spirit at Pentecost. If, therefore, David could trust the Lord for loving-kindness and tender mercies and forgiveness of sins, the members of the house of sons should be able to exercise full faith in the divine character and plan of salvation from sin.

The fourth verse would seem to ignore the fact that wrongdoing had been done to fellow-creatures, but we may preferably understand it to mean that while this wrong to fellow-creatures was recognized by the king, he recognized a still higher responsibility to God, whose laws he had broken and whose kingly office, typifying that of the Christ, he had dishonored. Hence, in contrast between what man might think of his crime as against man and his own still higher consciousness of his sin as against the Lord, the latter seemed so much greater as to practically obscure the former. The greater sin as against the Almighty quite overshadows the wrongs to humanity. David declares his recognition of the fact that God is the great Judge, and that whatever his judgment would be he knew in advance that it would be right.

In the fifth verse he introduces an extenuating thought, as though reminding the Lord that he was born in sin and therefore that perfection was not possible for him. But he does not use this fact as a screen behind which to hide his own responsibilities. Free to will though a sinner by nature, he was necessarily responsible for yielding as he did to temptation, but he was confident that the Lord would give him the benefit of every mitigating circumstance.

It will be noted that David expected punishment from the Lord for his sins, and was here expressing his confidence that the Lord would send no punishment which would not be reasonable and within the limits of justice. What he was praying for in this Psalm was not a remission of proper punishment, but rather for the cleansing of his heart in the sight of the Lord and for his restoration to the divine favor. As a matter of fact we find that the Lord did send a severe punishment upon the king, and that he restored the sinner to his favor, granting him to experience again the joys of his salvation. According to the sentiments of other kings of his time, evidently acquiesced in by the people of Israel, the king had taken an extremely moderate course in sin, in that he had not directly taken the life of Uriah but merely connived at his death in battle; but the king appreciated the fact that God was looking deeper than this and desired truth—righteousness in the inward parts—in the heart. Outward crime and a crime allowed in the mind are alike heinous in God's sight: his experience had taught the king wisdom. Now he wished to be thoroughly cleansed, and poetically says, "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." Hyssop was used in the sprinkling of the unclean under the Law. David, grasping to some extent the significance of the symbol, desired the antitypical cleansing of his *heart*. His appreciation of the Lord's thoroughness in dealing with sin and of his compassion in forgiveness are good lessons for some of the still more favored members of the "house of sons." Many of the latter, although having seen with "the eye of faith" the great atonement for sins made by our Lord Jesus, are still unable to appreciate the fact that the application of the merit of his sacrifice is quite sufficient to cleanse us from all sin and perfect us, that we may be recognized as absolutely pure in the Father's sight and dealt with accordingly—not as sinners, but as sons.

From the statement of verse 8 we may reasonably infer that during the year that preceded this repentance King David was in so miserable a state of mind that even the music of the singers and of those who played skillfully upon the harp and all the joyous songs of Nature were sore to his heart—had no gladness in them to comfort his heart when it was barred from the Lord's presence and fellowship. This is the thought of our hymn, which says of the soul which enjoys the light of the Lord's favor:—

"Sweet prospects, sweet birds and sweet flowers
Have all gained new sweetness to me;" and
"His presence disperses all gloom,

And makes all within me rejoice;" and

"While I am so happy in him,
December's as pleasant as May."

King David was longing for the joy and gladness which he had experienced in times past, and figuratively he likens himself to one whose bones had been broken. He knew that his joy and comfort would return if he could but have back again the Lord's favor. He knew, too, that the Lord could not look upon sin with any allowance, hence his prayer: "Hide thy face from my sins and blot out mine iniquities [unrighteousnesses]. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence and take not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation: and uphold me with thy free spirit."

No true Christian can read these words without feeling a deep sympathy with the different expressions; and even though as new creatures in Christ Jesus we have had no experience with such terrible sins as those which weighed upon the heart of David, nevertheless our higher responsibilities and higher conceptions of sin under the "new commandment" and under the instructions of the holy Spirit, as sons of God, cause us to feel with proportionate weight transgressions which in the sight of the world would appear nothing—such, for instance, as we have just mentioned: covetousness, hatred, slander, which are thefts and murders from the higher standpoint of the divine view appropriate to the new creation.

In verse 13 the prophet proposes to the Lord that his discomfiture in divine disfavor was used for the instruction of others,—to show transgressors the Lord's ways and to turn sinners from the evil of their course. How appropriate this thought to us! Not until we know experimentally through faith in the blood of Christ that our sins have been put out of the Father's sight, not until we have experienced the joys of his salvation and forgiveness, are we in any condition to be servants to the truth or illustrations to others. Hence we see that it is only those who have been begotten of the holy Spirit who are anointed to preach the Gospel. To others the Lord says, "What hast thou to do to take my word into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee?"—refusing to submit to the divine requirements.

The 14th verse repeats the same thought in a different form. If the Lord will deliver him from his *guilt* in connection with his sin, his tongue shall thereafter sing loudly the Lord's righteousness—not David's righteousness. This is the song that all the blood-washed may sing, "True and righteous are all thy ways, Lord God Almighty. Thou hast redeemed us from amongst men." None of us have any right to sing our own righteousness, for as the Apostle declares, "There is none righteous, no, not one." The mission of the cleansed ones is to accept and use the Lord's mercy towards them, to extol his righteousness, to acknowledge their unworthiness and to call upon others to recognize this fountain of righteousness and forgiveness.

"O Lord, open thou my lips: and my mouth shall show forth thy praise." This expression implies that none need expect to have a proper opening of their mouths to show forth the Lord's praises, and give the call from darkness into his marvelous light, unless the Lord shall first have opened their lips with his mercy and truth; for otherwise how could any expect to tell the glad tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people? This equally implies that all who have had forgiveness of sins should be in a condition of spirit to make a full consecration of their all to the Lord, and then all such should expect an unsealing of their lips, that the message of God's truth and grace may flow out from them for the instruction and blessing of others—as it is written, "Grace is poured upon thy lips." "Thou hast put a new song in my mouth, even the loving-kindness of our God." While these are appropriate specially to our dear Redeemer, they are appropriate also to every member of "the church which is his *body*," and all claiming to be of "the body," who have never had their lips unsealed to confess the Lord to the extent of their opportunity, have reason to question everything pertaining to their relationship to the Lord.

In verses 16 and 17 the King shows that he had acquired a deep insight into the meaning of some of the typical sacrifices;—though probably, by inspiration, he wrote more wisely than he understood. As we have seen in our study of Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices, only the Day of Atonement sacrifices were sin offerings, the burnt offerings and peace offerings of the remainder of the year representing the consecration to the Lord and his service. Grasping this thought prophetically, to whatever extent he also grasped it intellectually, King David expressed his realization that the Lord is pleased rather with a broken and contrite condition of heart than with burnt offerings, which were but types. So, too, we learn that nothing that we can give the Lord, even after our acceptance in Christ, has any value in his sight until first of all we have given him ourselves,—our hearts, our wills.

Let us ever keep in memory that a broken and contrite heart the Lord never despises, will never spurn. Therefore into whatever difficulty any of the Lord's people of the new creation may stumble, if they find themselves hungering for the Lord's fellowship and forgiveness, if they find their hearts contrite and broken, let them not despair, but remember that God has made a provision through the merit of Christ which enables him to accept and justify freely from all sin all that come unto him through Jesus—through faith in his blood. There is a sin unto death—a sin unto the second death—from which there will be no recovery, no resurrection; but those who have broken and contrite hearts on account of their sins may know that they have not committed "the sin unto death," for their condition of heart proves this, as the Apostle declares: "It is impossible to renew again unto *repentance*" any who have committed the sin unto death—wilful sinners against full light and knowledge. Let all, therefore, rejoice in the grace of our God, who is able through Christ, his accepted way, to save unto the uttermost all who come to him, laying aside sin and its desires.

"Now, if any man [of the church stumble into] sin [through weakness and temptation—not intentionally] we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John 2:1) Such, therefore, may come with faith to the throne of the heavenly grace that they may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every (future) time of need. (Heb. 4:16) But, like David, their prayers and hopes should be for a restoration of divine favor and not for escape from chastisements needful to their correction. God forgave David, but also chastened him.—2 Sam. 12:11-14.

Surely King David must have learned a great lesson in *mercy* from his sad experience. How many times must he have called to mind his response to Nathan's parable, "The man that hath done this thing *is worthy of death*: and he shall restore the lamb four fold, because he did this thing and because he had no pity!" Alas, poor David! these words showed that he had a mind, a heart, that was no stranger to justice and pity in other men's affairs, and hence that he was the more guilty in his much more serious violations of justice and compassion. "Blessed is he that is not condemned in that which he alloweth,"—who is not condemned by his own declarations in respect to the affairs of others. Oh, how merciful to the failings of others it should make us when we remember our dear Redeemer's words, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses"; and when again we remember that we may not even pray for forgiveness of our sins unless we from the heart forgive those who have injured us and again desire our fellowship.

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TO OUR GERMAN FRIENDS

Our dear Brother Otto A. Koetitz has just left us for Germany, his wife and child accompanying him. He goes to take the place of Brother Henninges as manager of the Elberfeld Branch. Brother Henninges, with his wife, will proceed to Australia, where he will open another Branch Office. Let us all join in prayer for divine blessings upon these brethren in their new fields of labor.

TO FOURTH CLASS POSTMASTERS

We should be pleased to hear from all of our friends who hold positions as Fourth Class Postmasters, and who would enjoy the privilege of serving the truth. We are aware that there are a number of such, and we should be glad to have word from them at as early a date as possible. There is work to be done.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

FALLING FROM THE FAITH

Not content with showing from the Scriptures that we are living in the "harvest" of this age, when the Lord as reaper will separate thoroughly between the genuine and the nominal, imitation "wheat," gathering all of the former into the kingdom "garner," we have endeavored from time to time to point out the fulfilment of this all around us. As already indicated, this "falling" appropriately appears first among the teachers in churchianity—the masses readily following their blind leaders into the ditch of unbelief.

One of the notable evidences of this growth of unbelief in God's Word and in the entire plan of salvation which it alone sets forth, is found in the following extracts clipped from a recent issue of *The Ram's Horn*. Not because the writer, Rev. R. F. Horton, D. D., of London, is higher in position than others who have taken the same stand (or rather have similarly lost their *standing* and fallen into unbelief); nor because *The Ram's Horn* is the only or even the leading religious paper to publish such open defiance to the Word, but because the journal was started as an opponent to infidelity—as a champion of the Bible and of faith in "the blood of the cross" as the only ground of forgiveness of sins—the only basis of the sinner's justification before God.

The matter is presented in the Question and Answer form, and is given the full indorsement of the journal. It follows:—

"Do you believe that man was evolved from the lower forms of life, or created as related in Genesis?

"I believe that man was slowly evolved from lower forms, and that evolution is even now not complete; but I also believe he is being evolved into the likeness of the image of God. Men as individuals are in all degrees of evolution. The image of God is what logicians used to call the final cause of man, the goal and purpose for which man began his adventurous career. The goal explains the means. Man is here with his face towards the goal, and the goal is the measure of the stature of Christ. Evolution cannot explain causes, cannot explain life itself, but must draw on a region of truth beyond itself to explain its own processes.

"Do you believe in the fall as related in the Bible?

"Yes, exactly as related—as an allegory, a parable in order to explain the mystery of moral and spiritual evil, remembering that Adam is but the Hebrew word for man, and Eve the Hebrew word for life. The story is the pictorial presentation of that alienation from God which is the constant experience of human life, caused by disobedience. We disobey and know it, reach out our hands, and in strange inflation of our little godless minds we set up ourselves, and by self-exaltation are ruined because we have left our God. The fall is strangely illustrated by the the writings of atheists."

The Ram's Horn's editor properly calls these "great questions" and their answers "clear cut and definite." We are glad to have the truth clearly and definitely presented, and when error is stated we prefer to have it *definitely* proclaimed also; there is less danger that it will deceive ordinary readers. We only wish that Rev. Horton had been still more explicit: some of the Lord's unsuspecting sheep will still be in danger of being deceived by these answers, and it shall be our duty and privilege to help them get clearer light upon the *full meaning* of the explanations.

The reply to the first question is *clear cut* in its denial of the Bible's account—that God *created* man in his own image; a very different thing from creating him either as a higher order of monkey or as a microbe, and expecting him to attain the divine image by his own efforts. Indeed, Dr. Horton totally ignores God's creative work in man when he speaks of "the goal and purpose for which *man began his* adventurous career." The Bible teaches that it is God's purposes and not man's that are being worked out, and that God gave man his start—and a good start at that—in an Eden whose every condition was *fit* for the testing of one already in the divine image and *on trial* to determine his obedient loyalty to his Creator's commands: the reward of obedience being a continuation of the divine image and favor unto life everlasting, and that of disobedience the loss of that image and favor in death.

Dr. Horton declares that "the goal explains the *means*." By this his readers are to understand that the past six thousand years have marked such progress amongst men as to imply that the process, continued, will result in man's attainment of God's image. Evolution is the "*means*" this eminent D. D. credits for all the progress of the world—Evolution is the Savior he lauds for raising man from lower planes of existence; and still uplifting him will, he hopes, *ultimately* make him an image of God. He does not tell us if he has *any* hopes for those now dying and for those who have died for centuries past without attaining God's image. He leaves us to wonder whether he expects that such will never have God's image, or whether he believes that a process of evolution continues beyond the tomb, and that *it* will ultimately "*save unto the uttermost.*" If he carries evolution into the heavenly conditions, would not consistency require him to claim that the angels are evoluting? and that God himself is evoluting? And if so, if God is not yet perfect, how can Dr. Horton or anyone else speak of man's becoming an image of a God who has not yet evoluted into a definite, fixed character?

When considering that man is imperfect, and that his proper aim should be perfection, we are not to take Dr. Horton's Evolution theory as the only one that will explain the situation. God's Word, through his chosen mouthpieces—his Son, the apostles and the prophets—is more trustworthy than Dr. Horton. God's explanation of present conditions is that, "By *one man's disobedience sin entered the world*, and death by [as the result of] sin; and so [thus] death passed upon all men." (Rom. 5:12) The Apostle explains the lesser degradation of some and the greater depravity of others by saying that, while all sinned and fell, some indulged more wilfully and fell more deeply than others. When they knew God they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became fools, . . . wherefore God gave them up to uncleanness through lusts of their own hearts . . . who changed the truth of God into a lie. . . . And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient,—being filled with all unrighteousness.—Rom. 1:21-29.

This is the Bible side of the question—not that monkeys set for themselves as a goal an imaginary image of God, and have gotten so far along toward it as is represented by present-day civilization, but that man in God's image was disobedient to his Creator's commands and sought out many inventions and degraded himself (Eccl. 7:29), and God has permitted him to set low standards and ideals before himself to his own ruin. The Bible accredits the high ideals which are doing so much to lift man out of degradation not to anything in monkeys or fallen men, but to God's revelations of his plan of salvation, which, however imperfectly understood, is "*the power of* God unto salvation, to every one that believeth," and indirectly a power for good upon the heathen as well as upon the people of civilized lands who *believe not*, in the proper and specific sense of that term. The promises of the Redeemer, and his work of redemption and restitution, lighted the hopes of natural Israel and lifted that nation above the other nations, which more or less caught its spirit of hope; and since the Redeemer's death and resurrection, and his outpouring of his spirit upon spiritual Israel, his church, a "little flock," has been the light of the world, which in a small degree has uplifted the civilized nations to a semi-decency which in many is but a thin veneer of "form of godliness."

The second answer deserves careful scrutiny, for it is an evasion instead of an answer. It is evident that the answer should not have been Yes, but *No, I do not believe in the fall as related in the Bible.* Adherence to the theory of Evolution forces this man, and everyone else who reasons logically, to deny the plain Bible narrative—not only the Genesis account but also the New Testament records, and to falsely teach that Adam and Eve were myths, that they never existed, that the record is merely an allegory—a fable. What, then, did our Savior mean when he said that he "came to seek and to save that which was lost," and to "give himself a ransom for all"? (Matt. 18:11; 1 Tim. 2:6) What did the Apostle Peter and all the holy prophets mean when they spoke of the "*restitution* of all things" if our race did not fall and need restitution? (Acts 3:19-21) What did the Apostle Paul mean when he said, "*In Adam* all die," and "By *one man's* disobedience," and "As by *a man* came death," and "The *first man* was made a living soul"? If the Bible record respecting Adam is unreliable we have no record of a first man, and if unreliable in this matter it could not be depended on at all. If left without an Adam and a fall and a Paradise lost we should have no use for a restitution, and a Paradise restored, by a Redeemer. If no fall no sin, and no need of redemption.

Thank God for the good hope *set before us in the Gospel*, so different from the Evolution delusion. "This hope we have as an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast," and reasonable and consistent and Scriptural in every particular. It acknowledges the fall, the need of the redemption accomplished by our Lord at Calvary, and the church's need of full deliverance from sin and death in the first resurrection, and the world's need of the great Millennial kingdom for its restitutional uplift opportunities for "the whole world."

Dr. Horton contradicts his first reply in his second. In the first he says, "Man is here with his face towards the goal,"

which implies that man is doing finely along Evolution lines; but he contradicts this in his second, saying—"We [including himself] disobey and know it, reach out our hands and, in strange *inflation of our little godless minds*, we set up ourselves, and by self-exaltation are ruined because we have left our God."—Where, then, is the fact toward the goal and the evolutionary power in man? Does not the gentleman's reasoning rather confirm the Apostle's words than his own?—See Rom. 1:21-29.

CHURCH COMMUNISM ARGUMENTS

An exchange says:—

"We declare that the germs of divine communism were planted in the church nineteen hundred years ago, and that in the harvest of the dispensation, divine communism must characterize the economics of those who awake to a realization of the genuine science of the Lord's coming. He who denies the principles of communism as it obtained in the early church in obedience to the law of love to the neighbor, cannot consistently lay claim to acceptance of the apostolic doctrines and practices."

* * *

We consider that the writer of the above item erred in saying that the *germs* of communism were planted nineteen centuries ago. Such of those germs as were proper for man were planted six thousand years ago, when God created man perfect, in his own image. The conditions resulting from the fall made communism impossible—injurious, and therefore unwise. The Lord's people, in proportion as they become heavenly minded, should be better prepared than others for a return to proper communism; but experience teaches what the Apostle Paul proclaimed, namely, that the treasure of the new heart, the new mind, can exercise itself only through our earthen vessels—all of which are more or less twisted and cracked, "so that we cannot *do* the things that we would."

It is far from the truth to claim that our Lord and his disciples dwelt together on communistic lines. On the contrary, the very terms of discipleship were that Jesus should be the acknowledged Lord and Master. To his disciples Jesus' word was law. They certainly did not have a commission of *authority*. True, Judas was treasurer of the funds, not, however, by vote or general appointment, but by the Lord's permission: for the moneys contributed were given to Jesus (Luke 8:3) and not to the disciples. He voluntarily shared with them. Clearly, however, he personally cared for his mother, Mary; and evidently, too, his disciple John had separately a home and means of his own.—John 19:27.

After Pentecost, under the impulse of the new mind, the Lord's people evidently did attempt what every true Christian feels considerably drawn to, namely—a limited form of communism. But communism was not taught as proper Christian usage, and not one word can be found in the Bible inculcating it. It was purely a voluntary movement, which the apostles neither aided nor opposed, and which speedily proved itself impracticable under present conditions. The Lord permitted his people to experiment thus as a valuable lesson—teaching the need of the resurrection-change to transform their bodies.

When the lesson had been given the Lord permitted a fierce persecution to scatter the Jerusalem church, and we hear nothing more of Christian communism in the Bible. Quite the contrary. The Apostle writes to "them that are rich among you," and took up collections for the poor, and exhorted each Christian to lay aside for benevolent purposes according as the Lord had prospered *him*—showing thus that neither the labor nor its monetary result were considered common property. The exhortation to "do good until all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith," and the exhortation that, seeing a brother have need, we should not content ourselves with giving him our good wishes but should share with him the gifts which we by God's grace enjoy,—these, and many other Scriptures we might cite, show clearly that communism was not practised and that the apostles did not improve such opportunities to inculcate or even commend communism. Doubtless many of God's blessings will be common to all men during the Millennium and after it;—yet this surely will be far from the anarchous kind of communism advocated by some today. The Millennial kingdom will be a monarchy—a theocracy. Similarly the heavenly kingdom is not communistic in government, for grades are recognized—angels, principalities and powers, etc. And, as now, in the church, the Apostle declares that God sets the members as it pleaseth him. So we find him teaching that after the first resurrection shall have brought the entire body of Christ to perfection of the divine nature, there will still be no communism of authority, but there shall be least and greatest in the kingdom, even as star differeth from star in glory.

HIGHER CRITICISM'S WIDE INFLUENCE

A German scholar and editor of a religious journal says:—

"We are at the beginning of a new epoch in the life of the church. The seventy-year war between mythology and theology in the domain of the Old Testament has seemingly ended in a complete defeat of the traditional views. The critical views practically control Protestant thought everywhere and have assumed international proportions. Not one university man in Germany holds to the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and all make concessions to the newer views.

"And yet when a person coolly and deliberately looks at the so-called 'certain results' of the critical investigations of the last century and a half, what are these 'results'? Nothing else than the conclusion that most of the books of the Old Testament are literary frauds; that they do not correctly teach the historical development of the religion of Israel, and, to make matters worse, intentionally and purposely misrepresent this history, especially those books that have been 'revised' in harmony with the spirit of the Deuteronomist. The whole Mosaic code, in its real essence, at any rate, is held to be a later fabrication, and its claim to have been given in the wilderness is regarded as an historical falsehood. Its whole historical background, it is asserted, is a fabrication, and the Law is but the outcome of a struggle between the advocates of the local cults and the hierarchical tendencies of the Jerusalem priesthood.

"There is only one other religious book that, in its origin and development, can be compared with the Old Testament, as the critics regard it, and that is the Book of Mormon. A mere glance at this parallel must convince the earnest Christian that he can have no share in the radical criticism of the times. The strongest argument against the hypothesis is to state it in its simple and naked truthfulness."

"THE AWFUL PROBLEM OF FUTURE RETRIBUTION"

In the New York *Christian Advocate* Rev. G. Jackson treats a timely topic thus:—

"I close these brief notes on Methodist doctrine with a reference to the dark and awful problem of future retribution. In Dr. Dale's summary of the characteristic doctrines of the evangelical revival, 'those which its preachers were constantly reiterating, and on which they insisted most vehemently,' he names as the fourth and last, 'the eternal suffering to which they believed that those are destined who have heard the Christian Gospel in this life and rejected it.' He then goes on to point out in words which I could wish to transfer bodily to my own pages, the great change which the belief of large numbers of persons now belonging to evangelical churches has undergone in relation to this subject. There are some—their number is probably small—who have accepted what is commonly known as the theory of universal restoration, who believe, that is, that all men will certainly at last reach the blessedness and glory of eternal union with God. Others again there are—and it is well known that Dale himself was one of them—whose study of the New Testament has led them to the conclusion that men possess immortality only in Christ, and that consequently those in this world who have rejected him are destined to *eternal destruction*, to a *second death* from which there is no resurrection. Others again can reach no definite and positive position; they find in the words of Christ and his apostles apparently conflicting teaching. Such according to Dale, is the present position of the doctrine in our evangelical churches. How far are his words true of Methodism? That we have been greatly influenced by the modification of belief it is impossible to deny, though how far the change has gone it is not easy to say. So far as I am able to judge, dogmatic universalism has no place among us at all. A few, perhaps, especially since the publication of Dr. Joseph Agar Beet's work on 'The Last Things,' have been looking toward *'conditional immortality'* for relief from the agonizing burden of the old belief. But the overwhelming majority of those to whom a restatement of their faith has become a necessity would probably prefer to class themselves amongst *those who can reach no definite and positive conclusion*. I am told on the highest authority that the late Dr. Moulton, who held an unrivalled position in Wesleyan Methodism as a saintly scholar, was wont in private to describe his own attitude as one of 'reverent agnosticism.' The phrase not inaptly describes the state of mind of multitudes of his younger brethren today. On the one hand, they can receive neither universal restoration nor conditional immortality, for they are resolved to be loyal to the New Testament, and they do not find either of these doctrines there. On the other hand, *they dare not speak as did many of their fathers of the doom of the lost, for neither can they find warrant for this in the words either of Christ or his apostles*. Therefore they are agnostics."

CHURCH UNION IN NEW ZEALAND AND CANADA

A Canadian journal says:—

"Signs are not wanting that Christian religions await only the coming of a Morgan to be fused into a gigantic trust, if such an ill-omened word may be used to describe church union. New Zealand Presbyterians have taken the lead by appointing a committee to wait on the Methodists and Congregationalists of that country to consider the merging of all three denominations. Encouraged by this example, the lay conference of the Methodist church at Winnipeg has passed a resolution heartily indorsing the action of the New Zealand workers and instructing a special committee to make inquiries with a view of definite proposals of a similar nature to Canadian Presbyterians and Congregationalists."

A THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION

The following, copied from the program for a debate arranged between the Editor of this Journal and a prominent Methodist minister of Allegheny City, will be self-explanatory:—

HISTORY OF THE PROPOSITION

On March 10, 1903, Rev. E. L. Eaton, D. D., pastor North Avenue M. E. church, addressed a letter to Pastor C. T. Russell, of the Arch Street (Bible House) Chapel, in which he said:

"Believing that nothing helps so much to get at the exact truth of a fact or doctrine as a full and free discussion of it; and that any legitimate thing that will attract the attention and arouse the interest of those who are indifferent to Scriptural truth is commendable; I have thought that a public debate of some of those questions about which you and I differ, and which we both believe to be vital to the Christian system, would be of immense interest to the public, and perhaps of great spiritual profit to those who heard, provided that the discussions be carried on—as I feel sure they would be—in a Christian spirit and with moral and spiritual earnestness. Therefore I have decided to call your attention to the matter, and to inquire whether you would be willing to engage with me in a joint discussion, at some suitable time and place in this city.

"The questions which I have in mind, but which I have not exactly formulated, are concerning the following:

"1—The Second Coming of Christ.
"2—The Millennium.
"3—Post-Mortem Probation.
"4—State of the Dead Between Death and the Resurrection.
"5—Eternal States of the Saved and the Lost.
"6—The Doctrine of Salvation."

The Christian, brotherly spirit of the communication was responded to in like manner by Pastor Russell on March 12 in a letter as follows:

"I assure you that your courteous expressions and Christian sentiments are fully reciprocated by me. I agree with you that such a public discussion as you suggest—of our divergent views on the teachings of the Bible—ought to be profitable, stimulating to Bible study on our part as well as on the part of all Bible students hereabouts. I therefore accept your proposition, and join you in mutual assurances that the 'Golden Rule' shall be observed, which will insure Christian courtesy of the very highest standard." . . .

Other engagements and appointments hindered an early consummation of arrangements, but on June 27 the gentlemen concerned appended their signatures to a joint letter embodying the general conditions which should regulate the discussion, viz.: that in debate the first speaker should have fifty minutes, the second speaker fifty minutes; and that each should have ten minutes for reply; that the meetings should be absolutely free to the public, and should be held in Carnegie Hall, Allegheny, on October 18, 20, 22, 27, 29, and November 1.

PROPOSITIONS

Sunday Afternoon, October 18, Three O'clock

Proposition 1.—The Scriptures clearly teach that divine grace and power, full and free, have been constantly exercised toward mankind since the fall, to the intent that all, if they would, might be saved. Hence there will be no probation after death, nor need of any. Dr. Eaton will affirm. Pastor Russell will deny.

Tuesday Evening, October 20, Eight O'clock

Proposition 2.—The Scriptures clearly teach that the souls of the dead are unconscious while their bodies are in the grave. Pastor Russell will affirm. Dr. Eaton will deny.

Thursday Evening, October 22, Eight O'clock

Proposition 3.—The Scriptures clearly teach that all of the saved will become spirit beings, and after the General Judgment will enter heaven. Dr. Eaton will affirm. Pastor Russell will deny.

Tuesday Evening, October 27, Eight O'clock

Proposition 4.—The Scriptures clearly teach that only the "saints" of this Gospel age will share in the "First Resurrection;" but that vast multitudes will be saved in and by the subsequent resurrection. Pastor Russell will affirm. Dr. Eaton will deny.

Thursday Evening, October 29, Eight O'clock

Proposition 5.—The Scriptures clearly teach that the second coming of Christ will precede the Millennium; and that the object of both—the second coming and the Millennium—is the blessing of all the families of the earth. Pastor Russell will affirm. Dr. Eaton will deny.

Sunday Afternoon, November 1, Three O'clock

Proposition 6.—The Scriptures clearly teach that the divine penalty for sin—actual transgressions of God's holy law—eventually to be inflicted upon the incorrigible, will consist of inconceivably great sufferings, eternal in duration. Dr. Eaton will affirm. Pastor Russell will deny.

* * *

We bespeak the prayers of the dear friends of the Truth, that in connection with this opportunity for presenting the Scripture teaching concerning the wonderful plan of God we may have wisdom from above; and that the name and character of the Lord may be glorified.

HOW TO SECURE REPORTS OF THE DEBATES

Anticipating your interest in the proposed discussions, we have negotiated with the leading Pittsburgh daily, *The Gazette*, to publish reports of each session in their issues of the following days.

Our arrangement follows:—

Eight copies of each issue containing the debate reports (with one copy each of the intermediate issues, as required by law to secure cheap postage) to one address, postpaid for 55 cents; or the same, with one year's subscription to ZION'S WATCH TOWER, for $1.50. All remittances should be sent direct to the WATCH TOWER office.

Believing that many of the friends will consider these six reports desirable for circulating amongst their friends and neighbors we have felt no hesitation about guaranteeing *The Gazette* 1250 subscriptions. *Order at once*, as, otherwise, the number printed may not be sufficient to fill all orders.

THE DAVIDIC COVENANT

2 SAMUEL 6:4-16.—OCTOBER 11.

"Thy throne shall be established forever."—2 Sam. 7:16.

David, during the first six years of his reign over all Israel, was kept actively engaged in resisting the enemies of Israel and enlarging the borders of the nation, in harmony with the original divine grant. Having to a considerable extent accomplished these things, and having built for himself a palace in Jerusalem, the reverential elements of his nature noticed the inconsistency of his dwelling in a palace while the typical residence of Israel's great King, Jehovah, was but the Tabernacle tent. His reverential impulses promptly suggested the building of a temple to replace the Tabernacle, and properly enough he consulted the Prophet Nathan, who rejoiced in this manifestation of the King's loyalty to the Lord, and indorsed the program. That same night, however, the Lord gave the prophet a message for the King, which, although it showed appreciation of David's intentions, forbade their execution, explaining that the reason that the Lord's presence was manifested in a tent, and not a permanent structure, was not because the Lord had not thought of this, nor because others of his servants would not have been glad to have erected such a structure at his bidding, but because the divine plan was otherwise. The Tabernacle was for the time being preferred, for certain reasons not explained at the time. The Lord, however, did assure David that by and by he would have a permanent temple, and that David's successor and son should erect it.

The Lord's people may learn a valuable lesson from this incident. We are not to conclude that, because our plans and projects are reverential and designed to be for the glory of God, therefore they must have the divine approval. With spir-

itual Israel, as with David, it is frequently true that "My ways are not as your ways, nor my thoughts [plans] as your thoughts [plans]; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, saith the Lord." Those who are of David's disposition—"after God's own heart"—will not only consult with those whose judgment they should consider helpful, as David consulted with Nathan, but if subsequently the Lord rejects their best judgment, and does not coöperate in the execution of their plans, will do as David did in this instance: they will unmurmuringly acquiesce in the Lord's plans, and coöperate therewith, and thus further attest that they are of the kind the Lord loves to honor and call beloved. To these also the Lord will grant other special blessings and favors, as he did to David.

The spirit of David in this matter—his desire to honor the Lord and to build him a great house or temple—finds its parallel in the heart sentiments of every true Christian. We do not refer to those who merely take pleasure in erecting grand temples of stone, but specially to those whose ambition it would be to organize the church of the present time—to glory in its grandeur and completeness of organization and function and service for the Lord. Those not in the right condition of heart, heady. self-willed, confident that their good intentions must be pleasing to the Lord, have proceeded to build various structures, each claiming his to be the temple of the Lord. As they have neither sought nor received divine instruction on the subject, but are following their own ideals, there is necessarily considerable diversity in these buildings, each seeming to its builders to be the right, proper and appropriate temple of God. These temples now number hundreds, the larger and more imposing ones being the Roman Catholic temple, the Greek Catholic temple, the church of England temple, the Methodist temple, the Lutheran temple, the Presbyterian temple, the Baptist temple, the Congregational temple, etc., etc.

But a small class follow the example of David, and receive instruction from the Lord to the effect that the present is not the time for temple-building; that he could have built his temple heretofore, and found many willing to serve him in this respect, but that he prefers that his representation in the world in the present time shall be extremely simple and unostentatious. Such receive of the Lord assurances, however, that in his own time and way, under a succeeding form of the Kingdom, a much more glorious temple shall be constituted than would be possible for us to build at the present time—an enduring temple which shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. All who are of the Davidic character, of the disposition *beloved* of the Father—acceptable members of his dear, beloved Son—will, as soon as they learn of the divine purpose, promptly submit themselves, and coöperate in the divine plan. That plan in the type was that David. as the man of war, battling for the right, and severely tried and disciplined, should represent the saints of God in the present militant condition, warring with the world, the flesh and the devil, and becoming in their own hearts and faith strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. According to the same type it is the mission of the present time to prepare the gold, silver and precious things for the future temple—ready for its construction. In the type these were literal things, but in the antitype, as the Apostle shows, the Lord's saints are the gold, silver and precious stones, which very shortly now, in the establishment of the Millennial kingdom, will be all thoroughly organized on the plane of glory, honor and immortality, and filled eternally with the life and glory of the Father. As David and his work of preparing for the temple, typifies the church in this present time, and our work of preparing ourselves and each other for the glories to follow, so Solomon's kingdom which followed represents the kingdom of the glorified Christ—the real Kingdom, of which the present is but the embryo, and the construction of Solomon's Temple typifies the resurrection of the church, in which all the members shall come together in glorious completeness, in the morning of the Millennial day. "Weeping may endure for a night [in connection with our fightings with foes without and within, and suffering for righteousness' sake], but joy cometh in the morning [when that which is perfect shall have come, and when that which is in part shall have been done away]." (Psa. 30:5) "God shall help her [the church, the bride of Christ], and that right early"—in the morning.—Psa. 46:5.

In connection with this refusal of David's proposition the Lord gave him very gracious encouragement, reminding him that every step of his onward way had been guided from on high, and that it was because he had faithfully looked to the Lord as his guide and counsellor that he had now reached the degree of development and relationship to the Lord and to the kingdom occupied. So the Lord encourages all who are of this David class in spiritual Israel today. All who are looking to the Lord, and hearkening to his Word, are reminded that the Lord is attending to his own work in his own way, and that it is a far superior way to anything which we could devise. We are pointed to the low estate we occupied on the animal plane, and how the Lord by his grace has advanced us step by step, until now we are children of God, heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him. It is for us to appreciate the lesson of past experiences, and to trust that he who took us from the horrible pit and the miry clay, and placed our feet upon the rock, and put the new song into our mouths, is able to bless us still further, and that in proportion as we hearken to his Word, through his prophet, the Scriptures.

The succeeding verses of the lesson mingle and commingle the natural blessings upon David and his literal posterity and upon natural Israel, with the still greater blessings that are to uplift all who will come into covenant relationship with God through the antitypical Son of David, the glorified Christ and his Millennial kingdom. Vs. 10 undoubtedly had a measurable fulfilment in literal Israel, in that for several hundred years they remained in their own land, under their own covenant—an experience very different from that preceding under the rule of the Judges. But the time when the Lord will plant them, and when they shall be moved no more and afflicted no more by the wicked, must apply to the grander restoration of the future, when, as he has promised, he will gather them out of all nations and peoples whither they are now scattered, and bring them into their own land. This later prophecy is in full agreement with the one made to David by Nathan. Then, as another Scripture declares, the Lord will restore to Israel her lawgivers as at the first, and her judges as at the beginning. Then it will be, too, that the house of David will be firmly established in great David's greater Son, the glorified Christ. Here the promises to the natural and to the spiritual seeds are more or less intertwined, just as they were in the Abrahamic promise. The seed of Abraham was both an earthly seed and a heavenly, as the sand of the sea and as the stars of heaven—the natural seed and the spiritual—and as the Apostle declares, the promise is sure to both of these, its proper part to each.—Rom. 4:16. Compare Rom. 11:25-32.

David's throne was perpetual through the line of Solomon down to Zedekiah, and when the Lord rent the kingdom from the hands of Zedekiah he did not give it to another family, but proclaimed an interregnum—a suspension of David's kingdom, which might not go to another. The language of the prophecy concerning Zedekiah is, "O thou profane and wicked prince, whose time is come that iniquity should have an end: remove the diadem, take off the crown; this shall no more be the same. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, until he come whose right it is, and I will give it unto him." (Ezek. 21:27) There has been no King of Israel, from Zedekiah's day to the present—the overturning of the kingdom has been very thorough. The kings who reigned over Israel at the time of the first advent, and previously and subsequently, were not Israelitish kings, nor of Israelitish birth, but were appointees of Gentile governments, which, from Zedekiah's day to the present, have trodden under foot the sacred land. The fulfilment of this promise to David is nevertheless secure, sure as the word and oath of the Almighty; and we who were by nature Gentiles, but who have been betrothed to Abraham's great Son and David's great Son and Lord, are still looking forward to and praying and patiently waiting for the fulfilment of this promise, saying, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"—even as our Lord taught us to do. As soon as this antitypical David, "Beloved," shall have assumed the reigns of government at the time appointed of the Father, he, as the antitype also of Solomon, on the natural plane, will build the Lord's house, and his throne shall be established forever—for it is the throne of the kingdom of Jehovah: and although in its mediatorial sense it will terminate at the close of the Millennial age, yet in a still higher sense it will continue to all eternity, because David's Son and Lord has been associated with the Father in his throne, and his bride shall be with him where he is, and share his glory, according to his promise.

Much of this promise was applicable to Solomon. The kingdom of David, or rather the kingdom of the Lord, was established in the hands of Solomon. He did build a typical house or temple in the name of the Lord. God did deal with him as with a son, chastening his iniquity, yet continuing his mercy with him: he did not suffer the kingly power to depart from David's natural seed, as he took it from Saul.

The 14th verse may properly be applied to those begotten of the Spirit to be Sons of God and joint-heirs in the coming kingdom. "For what son is he that the Father chasteneth not?" Even the Head of the body, although in him there was

no sin, needed the experiences called chastisements for his preparation, for his great position in the coming kingdom. Indeed, he bore the stripes of the children of men, as the Prophet declares, and we, as members of his body, will not be spared by the Father from the needed corrections in righteousness, which would make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light—so long as we receive them in the spirit of sonship, seeking to know and to do the Father's will.

THE JOYS OF GOD'S FORGIVING LOVE

PSALM 32.—OCTOBER 25.

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."

This Psalm will be quickly recognized as King David's exultant acknowledgment of God's forgiveness of his sins against Uriah. The first verse is the keynote of the entire Psalm. Verses 3-5 record the King's mental distress during the period in which his sins had come as a cloud between him and the sunshine of divine favor which he previously had enjoyed. His distress of mind naturally affected his physical health to such an extent that all of life's duties became burdensome and practically all of its pleasures died. In this fact we perceive that the King was far from the condition of a hardened criminal. His heart had been set for right and for the Lord, and was still set in that direction, even though under the temptation he had grossly violated the simplest laws of justice and friendship. The fact that he had gnawings of conscience, that his soul was not at ease under the burden of divine disapproval, were the hopeful signs in the case.

Since David was not a wilful sinner—since he did not at heart approve and rejoice in sin, but despised it, mourned for it—the Lord very graciously guided his affairs so that the lesson became more and more severe to him, until finally he could not bear it longer. Then, when the boil of contrition was fully ripe, the Lord sent his message through Nathan the Prophet to lance it, and his sharp reproof and severe sentence marked the culmination of the King's terrible mental distress and brought him to the point of confession to God and before the nation—to the point of prayer for divine forgiveness and restoration of divine favor, without which he realized that his agony of mind would continue.

The King's prayers were heard—God was gracious to him, his transgression was forgiven, his sin was covered, his iniquity was no longer imputed to him, because his heart was repentant—in it there was no guile. His repentence was sincere, full, thorough. The Psalmist exultingly sings of his own restoration to divine favor, and, doubtless under divine guidance, represented his as being a sample or illustration of what God is willing to do for all who similarly have sincere sorrow for sin, true repentance, who confess their faults and make fresh acknowledgment of their faith. It is safe to say that in thousands of God's people, not only in David's own nation but in every nation, kindred, people and tongue familiar with God's Word, the King's experiences and the lessons of this Psalm, showing his reconciliation with God and the exercise of divine favor toward him, have inspired faith and brought peace and rest to those cast down through weaknesses of the flesh—some of them as grievous or more so, if possible, than David's, and some of them for sins less great in the sight of men but realized as being great in the sight of God—sufficient to separate the sinner and his Lord.

As a picture or illustration this does not specially relate to the sinner coming from the alien world and seeking entrance into God's family: it rather represents one who had already enjoyed divine favor and lost it—one who had gotten from the light into darkness. The Scriptures clearly point out to us that even after we have become children of God it is possible to "fall away." They show us two classes of those who fall. One class is described in Heb. 6:4-7; 10:26-31. these we may have no hope for, because at heart they have become sympathetic with sin; they are wilful sinners, as the Apostle here describes. It would not be appropriate that God should exercise his mercy toward those who, after having come to a clear knowledge of the Truth, wilfully, preferably, approvingly delight in sin. The only thing remaining for these, as the Apostle declares, is judgment which will devour them as adversaries of God and adversaries of righteousness. Of this class the Apostle declares, "There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."—1 John 5:16.

It is of the second class that the Apostle says there is a sin not unto death—one which may be repented of, which may be forgiven, and out of which the transgressor may come with valuable lessons which may ultimately result in blessings of knowledge and experience which will be helpful to him in future conflicts and triumphs. David's sin was of this latter class—not wilful, not approved by him, but of the class of sins referred to by the Apostle when he says, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John 2:1) Of the same class of sins the Apostle says, "He is just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," and again, "Though he fall yet shall he not be utterly cast down." The fact is that transgression that is wilful and approved by the heart means an utter fall from divine favor in every sense of the word, while stumbling into sin contrary to the will, through weakness of the flesh and temptation, is to be considered a stumbling from which there is every hope of recovery.

Some one will perhaps argue that practically every transgression is a wilful one, because the Lord's people, however weak in body, have still the power to will right if they would. Such are inclined at times to accuse themselves of wilful sin, and to fear that they are under the ban of the second death. We point, however, to David's case as an illustration of what is not esteemed of the Lord to be a wiltul sin. King David deliberately planned for days and weeks and months in connection with his transgression. It cannot be denied that there was a measure of wilfulness in it, but there was a measure of something else also: namely, of weakness of the flesh, inherited as a member of the race from father Adam. Only divine judgment could clearly, distinctly discern how much of David's' sin should properly be accredited to wilfulness and how much to weakness. That it was not wholly weakness or ignorance is evident, and that it was not wholly wilfulness is equally evident. It was therefore what we might term a mixed sin. The proof that it was not wholly wilful is found in the fact that David's conscience afterward, before being reproved by the Lord through the Prophet, recognized his sin and realized the barrier which it had raised between the Lord and his soul. Had the sin been wilful, instead of feeling sorrow and contrition the King would have felt disposed to go on in the course of sin still farther, and would have had no longings for divine forgiveness and reconciliation. His desires for these prove to us that, although he had deviated so grievously from the proper paths, his heart, his will, was still on the side of the Lord and of righteousness. Let this serve as a lesson and illustration for all who have fallen into sin and who long for divine forgiveness and reconciliation. Let such accept the mercy of the Lord by faith and rejoice therein as did King David. Let them remember that those who have sinned the sin unto death it is impossible to renew again unto repentance—impossible to bring them back to a condition where they would be truly contrite and repentant for their evil course.

True repentance implies a rectification of the wrong to the extent of one's ability. David's sin being a public one, known to the nation, it was appropriate that the repentance should be as public as was the sin, and we have reason to believe that David would not have received restoration to divine favor had he not been thoroughgoing in his confession and his endeavors to make good the wrong he had done. His course had led some to blaspheme God's name (2 Sam. 12:14), and it was appropriate that his repentance should, so far as possible, offset this. And so the story of David's repentance has come down the ages with the story of his crime; and while the one has given occasion to blasphemers, the other has given hope and encouragement to many overtaken in faults, who, like David, at heart were loyal to the Lord.

We are to distinguish sharply between forgiveness of sin and remission of penalties. In this case we see that David's sin was forgiven, yet the punishment which the Prophet had foretold came upon him in due time. Thus we see that forgiveness here stands not for judicial forgiveness, which would have exonerated the forgiven one from all punishment, but it stands merely for the removal of divine disfavor which had come upon the King as one of the results of his transgression. We are to notice also that the King had not in his mind the thought of escaping the punishment which God had foretold and described; his joy was in respect to the restoration of communion between himself and the Lord—the removal of the sin-born cloud which had hidden from him for a time the light of the divine countenance, the smile of heaven, the fellowship of God. And so it will be today with all who, falling into sin wilfully, repent thereof and seek a renewal of the fellowship of the Father and of the Son from the right standpoint. Their moving desire will not be simply escape from punishment, but

specially a renewal of communion of soul broken by transgression. It is in full accord with this that the new creation at the present time rejoices in forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with the Father through the Son, yet live under practically the same conditions as the world, subject to the aches, pains, trials, difficulties and disappointments which belong in general to the fallen race because of original sin. The blessings of our new relationship to God consist not in our release from the burdens and difficulties of the groaning creation, but in the realization that we are no longer under divine condemnation, no **longer children of wrath** even as others, but brought nigh unto God in fellowship and communion through the blood of Christ. Our hope of deliverance from the burdens which afflict the whole groaning creation are centered in the promised kingdom blessings at the second advent of our Lord. Inspired by these hopes and promises we sorrow not as do others, but are enabled to rejoice in tribulation and to wait patiently for the Lord's time and for the Lord's way—the first resurrection.

This thought, namely, that in the present time our sins are merely covered from divine notice through the merit of our Lord,—that they are merely forgiven or given over or set aside, are hidden and not actually *blotted out*—is very clearly stated by the Apostle Peter (Acts 3:19-21) when, preaching under the influence of the holy spirit, he declared that his hearers should repent and be converted to the Lord, so that their sins might be blotted out when the times of refreshing should come—the times of restitution—the Millennial age and kingdom.

In that glorious Millennial day the church, now reconciled, will first pass inspection, and those counted worthy will share in the first resurrection, and the bodies they will then receive will be perfect, without blemish and without flaw—very different—from the mortal bodies of the present time, all of which are more or less marred by sin, mentally and physically. The receiving of the new bodies perfected will mean that all the blemishes, all the marks of sin for this class, were blotted out in the tomb, in the flesh, their spiritual bodies being perfect, even as it is written of this first resurrection class: "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body."

The world not having received reconciliation, not having received forgiveness of sins, will not receive the blotting out of sins in the Millennial morning. The great blessing that will come to the world of mankind as distinguished from the church, the body of Christ, the little flock, the elect of the present time, will be the blessing of forgiveness—full, free. The great atonement day (the Gospel age) will then have closed, its better sacrifices will all then be in the past, its blood of atonement will then have been presented before the Father and will have been accepted on behalf of the whole world. As a result of this acceptance, the divine forgiveness will reach the whole world through Christ—a remission of the sentence pronounced upon the world in the person of Adam. This is specifically stated by the Apostle, saying, "As by the offence of one judgment [sentence] came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift [will come] upon all men unto justification of life." (Rom. 5:18) But as forgiveness to David did not mean a repudiation of such penalties as were due him because of the measure of wilfulness contained in his sins, and as forgiveness in this Gospel age to the church does not mean an immediate release from the penalties that are upon the race, so likewise the forgiveness of the world's sins at the dawn of the Millennium and the beginning of Messiah's reign will not mean the removal of all the marks of sin, the disabilities, death conditions, which come upon all men partly through their own wrong doing. As with the church now, forgiveness of the sins means a covering of those sins, that we may be treated as though we were not sinners: so with the world in the next age—the forgiveness of the world's sins will mean that thenceforth Christ stands for the whole world before God as the covering of their sins, and that on account of the sacrifice of everlasting death upon them is annulled. The work of Christ and of the Millennial kingdom will be to lift up all who will of the world of mankind to the full perfection of their human nature, so that at the close of that age they may be perfect and entire as human beings. The work of the Millennial age will therefore be a work of blotting out sins—blotting out the evidences and traces of sin in body and mind. The weaknesses and impairments which sin has brought upon humanity will be thus overcome, and it is for this reason that that age is called the times of restitution, the times in which gradually the original likeness of God will be brought back to all those who will accept the divine favor through the great redemption.

In verse six King David suggests that his own experience should be helpful to others who at heart were godly—desiring God's way of righteousness, but who had stumbled in the way. He advises that they pray to the Lord promptly—that they should seek him while he may be found. David's own experiences seemed to teach him that every day removed him farther and farther from fellowship with the Lord. His exhortation is that in order that the floods of great waters of troubles should not reach such an one, he would be spared much by going promptly to the throne of heavenly grace to make confession and to obtain mercy and grace to help in future times of need.

In verse seven the King reverts to his own experiences and how he had found peace in the Lord—a hiding-place in which he could have rest; and although he knew to look forward to the prescribed punishments, his heart now being in fellowship with the Lord he could realize that the Lord's presence would be with him in those punishments and preserve him in that trouble, and that he would be, so to speak, enabled to hear the heavenly messengers singing songs of his deliverance even whilst in his *affliction.*

The concluding verses of the Psalm represent the Lord as the speaker, instructing David and all of his people who, like David, desire the Lord's guidance and feel wretched and troubled when any earth-born cloud intervenes between the Lord and their souls. The Lord engages to be the teacher, the instructor of all such; he will overrule their affairs, he will make all things to work together for good. Even their stumblings shall not prove disastrous; but because they maintain the spirit of devotion to the Lord and to the principles of righteousness, he will make even their missteps to become valuable lessons, that they may be henceforth less liable to stumble, and learn to look unto the Lord and to be guided in their goings by his eye.

Those whom the Lord instructs, and who will receive his instruction, will not be like the horse or mule that must be turned and guided by force. Their hearts will be so in sympathy with the Lord that he can deal with them otherwise, to their blessing and joy. The wicked shall have their sorrows, but the Lord's people will not be counted in among these; for his mercy shall be with them, restoring their souls. Therefore this class, through the Lord's mercy, will be counted righteous—not that they were righteous of themselves, but counted righteous through the divine provision in Christ These may be glad in the Lord, though they could not be glad in themselves. These, because upright in heart even though prone to sin and full of weaknesses according to the flesh, may be brought off conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood—may shout for joy as they realize the abundance of the divine provision "for the propitiation of our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—1 John 2:2.

ABSALOM'S SHAMEFUL DISLOYALTY

2 SAM. 15:1-12.—NOVEMBER 1.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"*Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*"—EX. 20:12.

The closing years of King David's life included a series of very trying experiences, which, however, under the Lord's providential care, apparently worked out for him a ripeness of heart and character exhibited to us in the Psalms of his later writing. These disastrous experiences date from the time of his sin, and to a considerable extent they were used of the Lord as punishments for that sin. Although in the case of Absalom's rebellion we may trace the evil which there culminated to circumstances which occurred long previous to David's sin, we are also to remember that it was quite in the Lord's power to have shielded the King so as to have prevented the success of Absalom's' deceitful machinations. Amongst these earlier influences may be mentioned David's marriage to Absalom's mother, who was not a Jewess but a foreigner, the daughter of a heathen king. The counsel of the Lord is to the effect that his people should not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers, and this counsel applied to the typical Israelite as it still applies to spiritual Israel. This disre-

gard of the divine wisdom was sure to produce unfavorable results in some manner at some time. Children born to such a mismated marriage are sure to inherit certain elements of character and disposition from the unbelieving parent which will eventually show themselves. In the story of Absalom we see an illustration of this. His vanity, insubordination, disloyalty, went hand in hand with an ambition which seemed to hesitate at nothing. It killed a half-brother who stood between himself and the throne, and later on stimulated a usurpation of his father's throne, and the seeking of his father's life.

Absalom is a distinguished example of dishonor to a father, and the resultant cutting off in the prime of life. The story of his unfilial conduct is told in this lesson. For the murder of his half-brother under provocation he fled from his father's dominions, and was three years an exile in the king's (his grandfather's) country. Then in intrigues in official circles his father's love for him was prevailed upon to such an extent as permitted his return to his home land, and eventually to all the privileges of the heir apparent to the throne. It is at this time that our lesson opens. The young man, remarkable for his handsome appearance, introduced a custom from his grandfather's court, a custom which still prevails in Egypt, namely, that a prince should have a special chariot and a bodyguard of fifty trained men. King David seems to have had so much love for his son that he practically let him have his own way in these matters. The people were pleased with the display, etc., of royalty in the person of their prince, and for several years a great and sobering change had come over the King, who was also advancing in years and who no longer showed himself amongst his people as much as formerly.

The vain young prince was quick to see that his spectacular course pleased the people, and quite probably he heard that his young brother Solomon was David's choice for his successor in the kingdom, and he concluded to make a bid for the royal honors of his father. His method was a crafty one: he would steal the hearts of the people from his father to himself. He had no filial affection; only selfish ambition is manifested in his course. He would use his father's indulgence, which had shielded him from the penalty of his crime, to undermine his father's influence. Surely, if it is wrong to render evil for evil, it is a despicable crime to render evil for good —to a father or a friend or to anyone.

The King in these days acted as a superior court, so that cases not satisfactorily adjudicated before the regular judges were appealed to him. As the nation grew these cases of appeal became more and more numerous, and doubtless the King's advancing age and his greater attention to religious things, writing of Psalms, etc., interfered to some extent with his conduct of this court business. Absalom perceived all this and turned it to his own account Meeting those persons who had appeals and who were delayed, he expressed sympathy for them, assuring them that if he were a judge in their case justice would be speedily meted out—of course implying that his hearer had justice on his side and would therefore be pleased with the results. As a prince it was the order of that day that he should receive homage from the people of the realm, and feigning a love and humility which he evidently did not really feel, he lifted up and kissed these people. A royal kiss would be a matter to be boasted of. To have the fellowship, nay the affection, of a prince would mean to many a complete perversion of their judgment and a binding of them to him as his obedient servants.

Not only was this conduct unfilial, dishonoring to his parent, but it would have been disloyal to any ruler, ignoble toward any benefactor. Indeed the word "stole" is none too strong. In stealing the hearts of the people the theft was not less, but even greater, than if he had stolen money or merchandise. There is a point of morality here which is but faintly discerned by many in our day. We regret to be forced to believe that quite a good many are very willing to steal the affections of another and to misrepresent another to their own advantage. The Lord's people of the new creation need continually to be on their guard against any such tendency in their flesh, which might disguise itself so that its real character would not be discerned readily by the new mind. The Golden Rule should be applied by the saints to all the affairs of life every day. It is a safe rule, and those who use it freely and are obedient to it will assuredly grow in the fruits of the spirit, all of which are branches of the one great spirit of Love.

This conspiracy against his father may be considered as having begun immediately on Absalom's return from exile, or as dating from his full acceptance back to fellowship with his father and a princely position. In the latter case it was four years in progress, in the former case six years. When he considered that matters were properly ripe for action, in order not to excite the suspicion of the King or others he asked of the King permission to go to Hebron, there to offer a great sacrifice unto the Lord in harmony with a vow made years before, and the occasion was thus made so important that the taking with him of many of the chief men of the army and of the city would not be considered remarkable, but rather an honor to the King through his son.

Meantime spies had been sent throughout the twelve tribes, and trumpeters were posted in various quarters, so that when the appropriate time would come and Absalom should proclaim himself king at Hebron, these trumpeters, being heard by others, the whole line of trumpeters throughout the twelve tribes would sound almost simultaneously, and the spies in Absalam's secret service as well as the trumpeters would explain the meaning of this to be that Absalom was now king. The people, who had learned to love Absalom because of his mock meekness, would thus gain the impression that the revolution of the kingdom was complete; that King David was certainly thoroughly vanquished, and that their personal prosperity with the new king would depend upon the prompt manifestation of their loyalty to his cause. The matter worked remarkably well, and as a result practically the entire nation was turned to Absalom in a day.

Some of those who went from Jerusalem to Hebron were totally ignorant of the use that was being made of them, yet their influential names being associated with Absalom would affect the populace; and they in turn, being with him and favored by him as his friends, and their future being dependent upon his grace, had everything to gain by adherence to his cause and everything to lose by its repudiation.

The conspiracy was successful to a degree that could scarcely have been anticipated. Practically the whole nation gave allegiance to Absalom, and that in so outward and marked a manner that it was necessary for them subsequently, after his defeat and death, to publicly request the King to return to the head of the government of all the tribes. If we wonder that a nation should so quickly forget the valuable services of so eminent a ruler, to whom it owed so much of its prosperity, let us remember that the King's confession would not be viewed by the populace as it is now viewed by God's holy ones. Doubtless some appreciated him in a measure, but more would disesteem him for "showing the white feather," and many would be inclined to consider him an "old hypocrite." His seclusion during those eleven years and his accumulation of treasure for the building of the Temple—perhaps involving taxes upon the people—could all have been viewed from an an evil standpoint and have assisted in his unpopularity. It is the fortune of all of the Lord's people to be misunderstood by the worldly, even when conduct and words and intentions are the very best. How careful, then, we all should be to walk circumspectly, and to avoid every appearance of evil!

Here, too, we may have an illustration of how God is able to *overrule* the affairs of the world in such a manner as to execute his designs without interfering with the free agency of any. Had it not been for David's sin and the penalty prescribed for it, Absalom might have had the same evil designs upon the kingdom,—might have made the same effort to accomplish his designs; but the Lord would not have permitted the matter to reach so successful a climax. An example of this is found in the subsequent attempt by a younger brother of Absalom to take the throne. He proceeded in many respects as Absalom did and under more favorable conditions, in that at that time the King had grown quite feeble with age and was unable to administer the interests of the kingdom personally or to take the field in battle. However, in due time the Lord brought the matter to the attention of David, so that the revolt was nipped in the bud before it had time to take effect, and Solomon instead of Adonijah was anointed king.

Just so it is with the Lord's people today. Conspiracies may arise to threaten the interests of the truth, but the Lord is at the helm, and will permit these to go no further than in his judgment is wise—only so far as they will work for the Lord's glory and the accomplishment of his plans, for the instruction and desciplining of his people, and for the sifting out of those who at heart are enemies of the cause. The general lesson for us is confidence in the great King of kings and Lord of lords; implicit obedience to him and loyalty to the principles of his government; the law of love in our dealings with all the true Israel of God and with mankind in general. The Lord is able and willing to make the things which would seem to harm us work out for our everlasting good and work disastrously to those who essay the injury of his people and his cause.

The Golden Text is well illustrated in our lesson. Absa-

lom, the disrespectful, ungrateful, disobedient son, selfish, avaricious and grasping, came to a disgraceful end in the prime of life, and marks a lesson to his kind. On the other hand Solomon, the peaceful, the good, the wise son, attained to the kingdom, and attained to it, too, with his father's blessing and the divine favor.

REV. DR. MORGAN SAYS HE IS NOT AN INFIDEL

"I preached this summer in Fifth Avenue church New York, a series of sermons on some of the saying of the Gospel of John. When I came to deal with the death of Christ, I began by saying that it brought me face to face with a moral mystery; that unless there was some explanation of that tragic ending of a pure life, it was the most terrible reflection on the government of God, and would make me an infidel. The whole sermon was to answer that position and to show how the death of Christ reveals the infinite goodness of God. But next morning I saw in the *New York Journal* a flaming headline:

"'DR. MORGAN PUZZLED ABOUT THE DEATH OF CHRIST: SAYS THAT THERE IS A MORAL MYSTERY IN IT, AND IT MAKES HIM AN INFIDEL.'

"This was copied into religious periodicals, and ever since I have been receiving letters explaining the death of Christ. In fact, the cutting has been sent to me three times within the last two weeks by people in England."

* * *

ZION'S WATCH TOWER, having circulated the error, takes pleasure in correcting it. It is always difficult to choose words which the worldly cannot misconstrue, and doubtless this illustration will make Doctor Morgan, and us all, more careful than ever to avoid expressions subject to such distortion. On the other hand we are glad that in this day of "falling away" from the faith there were still numerous religious journals ready to protect against such teachings in pulpits dedicated to God.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

A BIBLE LEAGUE

"A 'Bible League' has been organized in the Methodist Episcopal church, with the avowed purpose of *driving out destructive Higher Criticism*. Its president is Bishop Mallalieu, and the promoters hope to establish branches in every Methodist Conference in the country."—*Exchange.*

We are glad to see that the situation is being partially realized. It is much more dangerous than many might be willing to believe. No words can more graphically describe the results than the words of Scripture themselves, viz.: "A thousand shall fall at thy side." (Psa. 91:7) A thousand to fall to one who will stand means a great "falling away" from faith. Our Master's question is pertinent here, "When the Son of Man cometh [at his second advent] shall he find faith on the earth?"

The cleavage or separation on this subject can only result favorably so far as the gathering of the Lord's "jewels" is concerned. Those who will cling to the Bible honestly and intelligently will give it more careful examination than ever. And their longings will not be *satisfied* by the interpretations and creeds of the dark ages, ruled by superstition and the spirit of persecution. Nothing short of "the faith once delivered to the saints," which now rejoices our hearts with its lengths and breadths and heights and depths of divine love and provision, will satisfy them. These will be but a "little flock" in all, however. We will be glad to greet Bp. Mallalieu among them, but we do not forget the Apostle's words, that not many rich or great or noble are being chosen now, but chiefly the poor and ignoble, rich in faith, to be heirs of the kingdom.

That the battle above referred to has commenced is shown by the press dispatach:—

"CHICAGO, SEPTEMBER 10.

"*The Outlook*, an official publication of the Methodist denomination, has made a sensational attack upon the Methodist universities. That the doctrines of "Tom" Paine are being taught by Dr. Milton S. Terry, professor of Theology in Garrett Biblical Institute, and by Dr. Hinckley G. Mitchell, of the Boston University School of Theology, is the charge. Methodists are advised not to send their sons and daughters to schools 'where such teachers are allowed to remain on the faculty.'"

GENERAL UNREST PREVAILS

"*Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plow shares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong.*"—Joel 3:9-16.

The whole world is growing restless—preparing to fulfil the above prophecy, of which we quote only the introduction. The people of Macedonia and Bulgaria are impatient of the Turkish rule, and fomenting rebellion and bringing upon themselves the brutal vengeance of their rulers—the only kind of reprisal and suppression known to the Ottoman.

France is still in a warfare with the secret orders of the Roman Catholic church, in an attempt to free the rising generation from the incubus of superstition, which it realizes has for years been opposing the Republic by misrepresentations of the facts of history. In a word, the French Government is seeking to turn the religious schools built by the people into free public schools, similar to those of the United States. They refuse to have these taught by garbed nuns and priests, and the golden hours of childhood given specially to studying the Roman Catholic Catechism. In no sense is it a movement to curb the freedom of the Roman Catholic conscience to believe and teach as it pleases outside the public schools. This warfare is so absorbing to the French that other questions are no more than secondary. The clerical party would even favor war in hope of reviving monarchy.

In England a very similar question is before the public mind. Parliament has recently put the control of public-school education into the hands of the church (Episcopal), and other denominations are fearful of the results.

In Austro-Hungary partisanism runs high. Both nations desire to exercise controlling influence, yet both realize that division would injure both dreadfully. They maintain a union of hatred and bitterness that bodes an open warfare at the opportune moment.

Russia, according to the *London Times*, is keeping from general publicity her dreadful internal disorders, which may eventually force her into war to offset the restless spirit and give it employment. It says in part:—

"The murderous assault made on Prince Urussoff by the peasants of his estate, in the province of Tchernigoff, has its parallel in the similar crime perpetrated on the person of Prince Gargarin, his wife, and their guest, Prince Sherbatoff, in the province of Riazan, hundreds of miles further north. The governor of the province of Ufa has been murdered under the shadow of the Urals; and the prisons of St. Petersburg are filled with political prisoners, who largely belong to that most dangerous of all classes, the intellectual proletariat. The very forces of the state are not themselves untainted. There were military trials at Moscow not many weeks since for revolutionary agitation in the army, and it is even alleged that several members of the crew of the imperial yacht, including some non-commissioned officers, are at present in detention in the capital for being in possession of forbidden literature on board the *Standart*, (the Czar's yacht) herself.

"The government appears to have been attempting to practice a double policy toward the labor movement, which now for the first time is growing conscious of its strength. On the one hand, M. Witte seems to have attempted more than two years ago to solve the problem by discovering the real wants and wishes of the artisans and factory hands. As the result of a conference instituted on his suggestion, the men obtained the right to elect spokesmen who might confer with the manufacturers and government inspectors. But the new scheme has not been fairly applied, while a childish attempt has been made by the reactionaries to convince the working-men that their best friends are the bureaucrats and their worst enemies the enlightened middle classes. In several cases the men have elected their representatives, only to see them subjected to summary arrest, while any combined action by the men employed in different factories is severely punished. On the other hand the secret police of St. Petersburg have been endeavoring to educate the workmen in loyalty to the existing institutions of the country by telling them that the French Revolution led merely to the triumph of the *bourgeois*, bought by the blood of the proletariat, and that the Government are eager to meet them half way. Naturally these devices have not produced much effect, but neither, so far, have the repressive measures of M. dePlehve. The problem remains unsolved and perhaps

insoluble, and the fact may not be without its influence on the foreign policy of the empire, both in the Balkans and elsewhere. In the face of such enigmas foreign adventures have been undertaken before now as a diversion, but history shows that the remedy has often merely aggravated the disorder."

It is thought by some that the chief danger of war between Russia and Japan lies in the internal unrest of Russia, the supposition being that war might be esteemed an advantage if it would serve to unify the nation or give excuse for radical measure as war necessities, giving malcontents the appearance of open rebels.

Germany is so full of the factional spirit and so verging on to socialism that some are sighing for war to unite and cement them as was the case thirty years ago. The *Deutsch Wacht* says:

"No inglorious (*faul*) peace! And inglorious to the core has become that peace which, armored in steel and bristling with weapons, now lies upon our portion of the globe and beneath the weight of which we Germans have had to endure so much. The eternal repetition of peace twaddle has unmanned our ears; love of peace, emphasized on all occasions, has inspired in our enemies an impression that we are weak, and has already robbed some part of our nation of its confidence in our strength. The campaign in China was a flaming forth of the old warlike fire, but the blaze was soon extinguished. When we now make a movement to display our fist in far away Asia, the feminizing breath of peace is felt with enervating effect in Europe in order to make the sword drop nimbly from the hand.

"The peace that we now enjoy has damaged us because we value it above everything else, and have forgotten that readiness for peace brings honor only to those of whom it is known that they can be strongly stern, and are in a position to strike and make the splinters fly.

"The peace of this post-Bismarckian period has made us inglorious at home as well. We Germans can not maintain our sense of strength without the impulse of pressure from above, without a sharp, powerful summons at the moment we are to stand united. Such a summons has been wanting. Under Bismarck we were constantly being roused. We knew that honor might require us any day to grasp the sword again and fight foes outnumbering ourselves. This knowledge united us, or at least suppressed the divisions among the German people. We have no such influence at work now. Ever since the adoption of the policy of obsequiousness, the Philistines have evidently nothing to fear from a foreign foe. We are, in fact, good friends with everybody, as fine speeches and flattering telegrams have testified a hundred times. And the same tone prevails as regards German unity. Mighty has been the upstart growth of Ultramontanism under the protection of inglorious peace. It has already divided Germany into two camps, between which there is such total alienation of sentiment as makes concord impossible. Daily widens the rift made by Social-Democracy between the classes among our population, aided by the circumstances of the inglorious peace. Daily the blind masses are more and more set on by agitation. To our people this peril, which has a foreign intellectual origin, grows more dire, and it could carry out its mission of destruction only beneath a rule of inglorious peace.

"He only fashions a sword who has never felt fear. But the German people, God save us, have been made fearful since 1888. Then may heaven make us see the dread perils which glower down upon us from within and without. Thus may we free ourselves from the enervating, inglorious peace, and once more, in unity and strength, win the proud self-consciousness which inspires our saying 'Many enemies mean much honor!'"

A PROMINENT MAN'S VIEWS

Hon. Whitelaw Reid, for many years editor of the *New York Tribune*, speaking to the graduates of Vassar College and their friends, said in part:

Of specific excesses toward which our Democratic institutions seem to be tending, perhaps we do not need now to speak in any great detail. It may be enough to recognize that the American who colonized the Atlantic Coast and the great Middle West, who framed the Constitution, started the Government, developed the country under it, and fought a gigantic civil war to preserve it, is not the American who leads the popular movements of today. The type is changing; the beliefs are changing, and the aims.

He is neither Puritan any longer, nor Cavalier. He may outwardly deny the decay of faith, but he inwardly feels it. Nothing is more noticeable at the great centers of population and of national activity, or in any large section of what calls itself, and is often called, our best society, than this disappearance of the old foundation of character and action; this loss of profound, enduring, restful faith in anything. It is a laissez-aller age; an age of loosening anchors and drifting with the tide; of taking things as they are, with cordial readiness to take them hereafter as they come; of an easy indifference, whose universal attitude toward each startling departure from old standards is "What does it matter, anyway?"—an age, in short, marked by a refined, "up-to-date" adaptation of the old Epicurean idea that there is nothing in this world to do but to eat, drink and make merry, for tomorrow we die.

The loss of faith brings us by this short cut straight to the loss of purpose in life—of any purpose at least beyond purely material ones. To those who need money, the duty of getting it first, and above anything else, becomes the gospel of life. To those who feel the need of position, whether in society, business or elsewhere, their gospel drives them to all means within the law to obtain that. To those who have both money and position comes the only remaining purpose in life, that of using them for an existence of amusement and enjoyment. Is it too much to say that never before in our history have such aspirations so completely dominated and limited such large classes?

WHAT MANY FIND LEFT IN LIFE

But this craze for mere amusement and enjoyment, like other perverted appetites, grows by what it feeds on. The amusement soon becomes wearisome, the enjoyment soon palls, unless constantly more and more spectacular and bizarre. Perpetual change and constantly increasing variety of extremes seem to be the ever-rising price of keeping amused. One never is for long where one wants to be, or doing what one desires; there must be incessantly a rushing to and fro, and a change of pursuits, all under the glare of electric lights and the blare of brass bands, If in the country, one must hasten to the city, where something is going on; if in the city, one must fly to the country, where the crowd is not so mixed and where pleasanter house parties can be gathered; if in one's own land, one longs for the boulevards or the Alps; if abroad, one is eager to try the new steamer back; if at the seashore, one wants suddenly to know what the mountains are like, and can only find amusement in going to see when clothed in leather jackets, protected by masks and goggles, and powdered with dirt, rushing through the dusty air on the highways at forty or fifty miles an hour in a Red Devil, and leaving the luckless rustics in the way to go to a fiend of any color they like.

Even then this vehement vacuity is not amusing unless it is talked about. One must be forever before the footlights and if possible, in the center of the stage. Privacy is deadly dullness. Not to have your name every other day in the newspapers is to be out of the world, to be bored to death. Not to see every intimate fact about yourself or your friends thrust naked and shameless under the public eye is to feel that you are dropping out of the swim.

* * *

The public seems to be slowly awakening to the realization that the far-sighted Jesuits have been working their representatives into the *Associated Press*, which supplies general news to many newspapers all over the world. The effect seems to be to give prominence and good tone to things Roman Catholic and to suppress as much as would be wise of contrary news. Young Catholics are trained to this service and quietly and unostentatiously pushed into controlling positions—unsuspecting Protestants often unwittingly assisting in the scheme.

THE "DEBATE" REPORTS

Responses to our notice that the *Pittsburg Gazette* would publish lengthy reports of the Doctrinal Discussions between Doctor Eaton and Pastor Russell almost overwhelmed our office force as well as the *Gazette's*. Orders have come in for more than twice the number we guaranteed and more are still coming.

Friends will please accept the arrival of the *Gazette* as evidence of our having received their letters, and not expect other acknowledgment. Indeed, as may be surmised, all of our correspondence is greatly belated on this account, and it will require considerable time to get caught up;—and the less important letters may need to be wholly neglected, much as we should like to reply to them all.

The *Gazette's* supply of the first report becoming exhausted, that journal reprinted the debate reports under another date, and request us to explain the reason, and to assure subscribers that all orders received will be filled promptly. Should any of our friends not receive the papers ordered by them, they should report to us by postal card. Later orders will be filled at once by special edition containing the six debates. These latter we will supply postpaid on order—at the rate of 2 cents each. In lots of 50 or over one cent each, express paid.

PASTOR RUSSELL'S WEEKLY DISCOURSES

The Pittsburgh Gazette proposes to print Brother Russell's sermons every Monday hereafter, until further notice. Thinking that some of our readers would like to have these we have arranged to club the *Gazette* and the WATCH TOWER at $3.25 per year,—beginning as soon as you like. This will give the WATCH TOWER semi-monthly and the *Gazette* daily postpaid at less than one cent per copy. Send all subscriptions to us.

But this does not apply to territory within 100 miles of Pittsburg where the *Gazette* may have an *agent*, as the agent must be protected. However, there are many places near at which there are no agents, and where agents can be found the Monday papers can be obtained from them.

"YE KNOW YOUR CALLING, BRETHREN"

"But ye are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."—1 Peter 2:9.

"Vocation" is the term that describes the special business of any person, while the word "avocation" describes an occasional business; as, the Apostle Paul's vocation was that of a minister of the truth, while his avocation, or occasional employment when necessary to provide things honest and decent in the sight of God and men, was tent-making. Similarly all of the Lord's people should consider that their vocation or calling is of God and relates to the special or spiritual ministry in which he privileges us to engage as fellow servants of our Lord Jesus Christ. In order to provide the necessities of life for ourselves and those dependent on us, it is necessary that we should have some earthly employment also; but this we should always regard, not as our vocation—not as our chief or principal business in life—but merely as our avocation, or temporary engagement incidentally necessary to our chief business. Of course it would not be wise for the Lord's people to speak of spiritual things from this standpoint to worldly people. Our Lord warned us against so doing, saying, "Cast not your pearls before swine"—attempt not to tell the deep and precious things that belong to you as spiritual new creatures in Christ, and which you only can understand and appreciate through the holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:14), to those who have not the spirit and who cannot comprehend your teachings and who would be disappointed in the matter, as swine would be disappointed if you gave them pearls which they could not appreciate, instead of corn which they could appreciate. In our own hearts, however, and amongst the "brethren." this thought should always be uppermost; namely, that our calling, or business, or vocation is of God,—that we are called to be members of the royal priesthood.

We are viewing our text just now specially from the standpoint of the priesthood, or new race, or new nation, different from the remainder of mankind in that God has invited them to become joint-heirs with his Son in the great royal priesthood which he designs shall ultimately bless all the families of the earth. The royal feature of the matter belongs to the future: we have no royalty yet. It is only in prospect; it will be attained after we have faithfully performed the service which belongs to this present time and have thus proven ourselves worthy, according to the divine terms, to be members of the glorified priesthood through our Lord Jesus' merit, and under him as our head. Meantime it behooves us to learn distinctly what is expected of us as respects our vocation in the present time; what obligations attach to us as those who have made the consecration and have been respectively accepted to this royal priesthood and anointed with the holy Spirit in anticipation of our attainment of the goal.

The Apostle Paul (Heb. 8:3) declares that "Every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man [the man Christ Jesus] have somewhat also to offer." The thought is that the high priest serves,—is as an offerer or sacrificer to God. True, the Apostle is speaking here of our Lord Jesus and not of us, but from his own words elsewhere we will know that it is expected of all the members of the body that they shall be joint sharers with their Lord and Master in the sufferings and sacrifices of this present time, that they may be counted worthy to share with him the glories of the future. And the same Apostle explains that he (Christ) is our Head, and that we are, as members of his body, "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." walking in his footsteps. The lesson, then, to each member of this royal priesthood, is that the special mission of their office, vocation, calling in the present time, is to sacrifice.

In the light of the Apostle's explanation we can see that our Lord Jesus as the Head Priest had something to offer to God, and that he did offer it in that he offered up himself a sacrifice. (Heb. 7:27) We can see how his sacrifice could be acceptable to God, because in him was no sin—he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. But how can we, who "by nature are children of wrath even as others,"—how can we fulfil our mission as priests to present some offering to God when we have nothing which is our own that would be acceptable, because all we have and are is by nature tainted with sin and under divine condemnation? The Scriptures answer that "that which God hath cleansed," his people are no longer to consider common or unclean; they tell us that God has justified us freely from our imperfections through the merit of Christ's sacrifice; they tell us that we are acceptable to God "in the Beloved."

The Apostle carries this same thought further, and emphasizes it, saying, "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, [no longer aliens, strangers, foreigners, but redeemed and accepted of the Father], that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1) Here the entire matter is summed up. We are not to consider any longer that, after being justified by faith, the Lord esteems us unholy and unacceptable, but are to understand that the very object of our present justification by faith was to make us acceptable to the Father, to make us to be priests, to furnish us opportunities to do the work of a priest in this present time: namely, to sacrifice—to sacrifice ourselves—to present our bodies living sacrifices to God through Christ's merit. What a wonderful plan! what a wonderful privilege to be permitted to be priests! what a gracious arrangement! It gives us opportunity of completing the priestly service of sacrificing now, to the intent that by and by we may enjoy the privileges of the other part of the priest's work, connected with the glory and royalty of the Millennial kingdom.

If then God ordained the High Priest to offer sacrifices, and that was the particular feature of his calling while on earth, so likewise it is the particular feature of the calling of all those who would walk in his steps—ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices to God. The Apostle Peter calls this same matter to our attention in a verse preceding our text (v. 5), where he declares the church "A holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Ah, but, says one, the apostles differ respecting what shall be our sacrifices. The Apostle Paul declares, "Present your body a living sacrifice," while the Apostle Peter here declares that we should offer up spiritual sacrifices, and our bodies are certainly not spiritual bodies. We reply that the word "*spiritual*" in this text is not found in the oldest Greek manuscript, known as the *Sinaitic*. Apparently some scribe of about the fourth or fifth century must have concluded that the Apostle had left his statement of the matter incomplete, and that there would be danger of some undersanding him to mean that the royal priesthood should offer bullocks and goats; and to hinder such a construction of the Apostle's language, the no doubt well-meaning copyist added the word "*spiritual*."

But in the light of present truth we can see that he erred in attempting to assist the inspiration which guided the Apostle to a proper statement of the matter. We can see most clearly that our Lord Jesus did not offer a *spiritual* sacrifice, but a *human* sacrifice for sin—that for this reason it was necessary that he should leave the spiritual condition in which he previously existed and should take upon him human conditions,—become a man,—that he by the grace of God might taste death for every man. Adam was not a spirit being when he sinned, hence God's sentence was not against a spirit being, but, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Hence it was necessary that the Lord Jesus should become the *man* Christ Jesus; that as by a *man* came death so also by man should come the resurrection of the dead. And as our Lord's sacrifice was not a spiritual sacrifice but a human one, so it is also with our sacrifice: we are not to sacrifice our spiritual natures nor our spiritual interests nor anything else that is spiritual; but we are to sacrifice our justified human natures, our justified flesh, as the Apostles urges, "Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

The question should now properly arise in the minds of all who realize themselves as consecrated to the Lord, as members of the royal priesthood, To what extent am I fulfilling my present priestly office, and performing daily as I may have opportunity my appointed work of sacrifice—laying down my life for the brethren? Too many, alas! under the false teach-

ings of Babylon, both in word and in custom, have come to consider that money getting and honor getting and ease getting and general self-preservation constitute the reasonable service of the Lord's people. Sacrificers are looked upon as deluded fanatics—especially in proportion as the sacrificing is done for the truth's sake in the interest of spiritual things. We are not, however, to be taught of the world, nor by a cold worldly-wise churchianity; but we are to hearken to the voice of the good Shepherd, to hear his Word, to learn of him if we would be prepared by him in the school of Christ for the glorious things promised us as his joint-heirs in the future. "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him," is the message.

We can see how the Apostle, even though finding it at times necessary to engage in the business of tent-making, might be considered as a priest whose time, energy, talents were all sacrificed to the Lord and given freely in serving his people—in doing good unto all men as he had opportunity, especially unto the household of faith: but how can others who have not the opportunity, not the talents, not the open door for such special service as his—how can those who must provide for their own household according to the Lord's Word, be sacrificing priests, when as a matter of necessity nearly all of their time must be given to tent-making, shoe-making, housework, or whatever other employment providence seems to have opened before them as their avocations? When it is necessary to spend nearly all of eight to twelve hours per day continuously in the service of our avocations, how can we consider or serve the interest of our vocation, the priesthood?

The Lord has very graciously made arrangements adapted to this very condition. He assures us in his Word that it is not the amount we shall accomplish in this cause, but the spirit, the desire and the effort which we manifest that in his esteem would indicate the degree of our self-sacrifice. He graciously declares that if our hearts be given to him, whatsoever we do may be done as unto the Lord, and if done as unto him will be accepted by him. From this standpoint we can see that the work which the Apostle Paul did upon the tents passed to his credit as a part of his priestly sacrifice, just as much as the other part of his time which he spent in more congenial methods of proclaiming the Gospel. Similarly, we can see that the shoemaker working at his bench, or the tinner at his labor, or the butcher in his shop, or the housekeeper, if at heart fully consecrated to the Lord, would be seeking to dother work as unto the Lord, and that if careful to use his opportunities for proclaiming the truth, for serving the brethren, for doing good unto all men as opportunity afforded, the improvement of the few opportunities coming to them and their willingness to sacrifice personal tastes and convenience for the service of the truth and for the brethren, would be counted by the Lord as a full sacrifice, because such a disposition in respect to little things would imply an equal faithfulness in the presence of larger opportunities. Luke 16:10.

This does not mean that the Lord's people are to be content with the usual routine of daily life in the home or in the shop, and are to say to themselves, "God accepts my labor as thoroughly as though it were given directly to him in some other more desirable form," but it does mean that each person so situated should day by day carefully scan his earthly duties and obligations to see in what manner he could justly and properly cut off moments, hours or days from the service of earthly things and earthly interests, that now might be given to sacrifice for spiritual things and spiritual interests of himself or others. The consecrated heart, the sacrificing priest, is the one who will improve the moments as they swiftly fly, using them as far as possible in the Father's business. For instance, a workman may not take his employer's time to talk religion to his mate, for that would be unjust and contrary to the divine arrangement; but in the noon hour he may improve opportunities, and instead of engaging in worldly or foolish conversation or rude jest, he will seek to use opportunities to tell the good tiding to others; or if he have no such opportunities, finding no hearing ears, he will use the time in spiritually uplifting himself by study of the teachings and principles of the divine Word. In the evening he may not neglect duties of a social nature toward his wife and children, but will remember that under the divine arrangement he has some obligation toward them in respect to their mental and spiritual development as well as for their temporal necessities, and he will seek to use a part of his time in their service, perhaps sacrificing an inclination to read some story of light literature, or to indolently while away the time doing nothing. In addition to thinking of his obligations toward his family, he will think beyond them of his own spiritual needs and of the Lord's family and their necessities, and will endeavor to judge of the mind of the Lord in respect to how each moment shall be used. He consecrated every hour, every moment, when he presented himself a living sacrifice to the Lord; and the opportunities of laying down moments and hours in the interests of his new creature and in the interests of spiritual brethren, etc., are coming and going daily, and the Lord is looking to see to what extent he was a sincere covenanter, sacrificer. These sacrifices on behalf of neighbors, friends, wife, children, husband, parents, are accepted of the Lord if done as a result of consecration to him, and as a result of the believing that these are the opportunities which his providence has opened for exhibition of the self-sacrificing spirit.

The same opportunities, though in a different form, come to the youth who is under age and subject to his parents, and to the wife surrounded by family cares and duties. If the consecration be to the Lord, then every sacrifice of our just rights and interests on behalf of ourselves as new creatures, on behalf of husbands or children, father or mother, neighbors or friends, brethren in Christ, is counted of the Lord as so much done to him; whereas if the very same services were rendered from any other standpoint—by any one unjustified, and not consecrated to the Lord, or merely done to the individuals and not as a sacrifice unto the Lord—these things would not count to us as priests, as our sacrifices; but when viewed from the standpoint of consecration to the Lord, and faithfully performed as being our best judgment of what would be the Lord's will concerning our use of our time, interests, talents, etc., they are sacrifices wholly acceptable to God, our reasonable service.

We are to remember that abstaining from immoralities, from sins, is not sacrificing. Nothing can be acceptably sacrificed to the Lord that is not of itself right, just, proper. It may be imperfect, as all that we have and do are necessarily blemished by reason of our share with the race in its fall; but unintentional blemishes of proper things are all covered by the merits of our Redeemer's sacrifice, as we have just seen. Another form of sacrifice frequently not discerned by the royal priesthood is the opportunity of renouncing our own ways or plans, our own methods or preferences, and in the interests of peace accepting instead the plans, the preferences of others—where it is merely a matter of personal preference, and where we believe the Lord will be as willing to have the matter one way as another. We can in the interests of peace sacrifice our preferences to the wishes of others if we see some good can be gained by such a course; as, for instance, the preservation of the peace of the home or the opportunity of winning our opponent to the truth, or any good cause. Such sacrifices are pleasing to the Lord, who instructs us through the Apostle that, so far as in us lies, we should live peaceably with all men; and that we should rather suffer wrong and take injury from a brother in Christ than take the matter before the world of unbelievers and thus risk a general odium upon the Lord's cause.—Rom. 12:18; 1 Cor. 6:7.

We have known cases, however, where dear brethren in the interests of peace and harmony yielded their rights—and properly enough where no principle was involved—but who, nevertheless, held a kind of grudge against those to whom they had yielded, feeling that somehow or other they had been defrauded of their rights. This is wrong, and indicates that the sacrifice was not fully made. If the matter in dispute had been fully sacrificed, as unto the Lord, there would surely have been no room for feeling that it had been taken from them. Under such circumstances the Lord's dear followers would do well to make haste to cast out of their minds anything akin to resentment and the feeling that they had been deprived of their just rights, and, instead, to take into their hearts that they had fully, freely, absolutely given up the matter in the interests of peace and it was dead, buried forever, with no resentment toward any one, but, on the contrary, with the feeling of joy and rejoicing that this matter had been sacrificed to the Lord, to the interests of the home or the church or what not, because they believed that it would be pleasing, acceptable to him, and, therefore, their reasonable service.

We are to remember that we have each but one sacrifice; that it is to be rendered to the Lord day by day in the improvement of every opportunity, as it comes to us, to serve him and his. We are to remember that while it consists of many little sacrifices, some of them too small to mention or even to consider, nevertheless it will require all of these to complete the one sacrifice which we made at the beginning of our induction into his family. When we gave our wills, our hearts, we gave our all; and any holding back in any of the little affairs of life—any refusal to sacrifice that which we think would please the Lord—is a keeping back of that much of what we have devoted to him.

The Lord is very patient toward us, and gives us repeated opportunities to accomplish the work of sacrifice; but

it must be accomplished, our wills must be slain, must be submitted to the Lord's will, else we shall never attain to jointheirship with him in the kingdom—never become members of the overcoming royal priesthood. He graciously gives us line upon line, lesson upon lesson respecting this subject; shows it to us in his Word from different standpoints, impressing upon us the necessity of being dead to self and alive toward God through Jesus Christ our Lord—the necessity of developing the various graces of the Spirit which are implied in this sacrificing work. Every one who will be a sacrificer must of necessity be meek, humble, teachable, else very shortly he will get out of the way. He must also learn to develop the grace of the Lord along the line of patience, because it certainly requires patience to deny ourselves and to submit at times to injustice where there is no proper means of avoiding it without doing injury to the Lord's cause or to some of his people. It also implies a cultivation of brotherly kindness and, in a word, the development of the whole will of God in our hearts and lives; namely, love, which must be attained in a large and overcoming measure ere we shall have completed our earthly work of sacrificing.

In our studies of the "Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices," we saw that every one who took part in the priesthood was required to wash his hands and feet at the laver. We saw that the laver represented the Word, or message of God, and that the water, therefore, represented the truth; and thus it is the truth which is to cleanse the royal priesthood from the defilements of the flesh. As a whole we are clean, being covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness; but in our contact with the world we are to seek to put away the defilements of earth which come to us in connection with our daily walk and service, represented by our feet and our hands. And the Apostle, in the verse preceding our text, is not forgetful to mention this cleansing which all must have in order to be acceptable as members of the royal priesthood. In the verses 1 to 3 inclusive, he mentions that those who would be royal priests must lay aside "all malice and all guile and hypocrisies, and envies and all evil speakings." As the sacrificings requires all the present life, so the washing requires all the present life; and only those who both wash and sacrifice will be accepted into the glorious royal priesthood of the future.

It will be noticed that the Apostle does not represent that these priests will wash themselves from murders and gross sins, for those who have been begotten of the holy Spirit are necessarily far removed from any sympathy with any of the grosser forms of sin. What he does show is the more refined forms of evil which still infest the flesh, even of those who have the new mind, and which require to be mortified, rooted out, cleansed away. How "close girdling" are these sins that are mentioned—how many of the prospective members of the royal priesthood find that they have defilements along this line, malice, guile, hypocrisy, envy, evil speaking! It is safe to say that every one has some, if not all of these weaknesses in the flesh to contend with—especially at the beginning of his entrance upon the priestly vocation. How carefully all should seek to put all these away! how each should scrutinize, not only every act of life and every word and every thought, but, additionally, every motive underlying his words, thoughts and actions, so that they may be more and more purified from the earth defilements and be more and more acceptable to the Lord!

With our very best endeavors we may never get entirely free from all of these "close girdling" sins while still in the flesh; but one thing is sure—the heart must be free from them, else we can never be accepted as members of the glorious priesthood. The heart must be so completely filled with the love of God that it will feel a repugnance to all of these evils, which are repulsive to the divine mind; and happy for us it is that God has promised to accept such a condition of our hearts, and that knowing the imperfections of the flesh with which we contend, he is not requiring that we shall attain to absolute flesh perfection, but, that we shall be pure in heart in order to see him and to share in the glory which he has promised to his people.

What we have seen respecting the perfect love which must dominate our hearts in order to enable us to complete our sacrifice in the Lord, is not so different from the Lord's requirements respecting all his creatures. There could be no angel of heaven acceptable to the Father without this spirit of love, of devotion, which, if the conditions in heaven were similar to the conditions now in the earth, would prompt and inspire all of the Lord's faithful angels to do good to the needy ones even at the cost of self-sacrifice and inconvenience. We can see that the same law of love must ultimately be required of the world of mankind who shall be developed under the training of the Millennial age, the world's school time. They also must ultimately reach that degree of love which, if the conditions were similar to those which now prevail, would lead them to sacrifice in the interest of the needy. Nothing less than this could be considered as a recovery on man's part of that which was lost—the image and likeness of God.

The peculiarity, then, of this present time and of the church's position in it, is the fact that we are begotten to the new mind, the new will, the new spirit and law of love, while still sin and death prevail around us. Hence to us living under present conditions, in contact with the weaknesses and imperfections and trials of others, it becomes, necessarily, an evidence of the new mind that, seeing these conditions, we should be permitted to make sacrifices on behalf of the brethren and on behalf of all men as we have opportunity. These indeed are severe testings and trials, which will come to the world of mankind during the Millennial age, when all conditions will be favorable to the development of the new mind of love. They are more severe testings also than are brought to bear upon the holy angels, who, although possessing this love, have not the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh, the fallen nature, to contend with in its exercise, and who, therefore can gain no such victory as the church of Christ is called upon to fight for and by the grace of her Lord to win.

It is on this account that the Lord has attached to this "little flock," now being selected under these self-sacrificing conditions, so great a reward; as it is written,—"Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." (1 Cor. 2:9) Even though God hath revealed these things to us by his spirit, which searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, nevertheless it is not possible for us to comprehend, know fully. As the Apostle says, we now see these glorious things of the future through a smoked glass, obscurely; but by and by we shall see face to face and know as we are known, and appreciate fully the wonderful things which God hast declared to us through his Son and his faithful apostles. Then the royal feature of this priestly office will be added, and they shall be indeed priests, royal, sons of the Highest, and shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

This royalty, while it will have great dignity, majesty and power, is not attracting us by any illustrations we have in earthly royalty, with its pride and often selfishness and pomp and show. It is attracting us, however, by the glorious things which God hath spoken respecting the work of these royal priests—the work of ruling, blessing and uplifting the world of mankind. This glorious hope inspires, encourages and revives the fainting priests who are now sacrificing, and the Lord has so intended. In view of these things let us remember our calling, brethren, and not mistake the avocations of life for the great vocation which God hath set before us in the Gospel. Let us see to it that every day shall witness our faithfulness to our priestly ordination of cleansing, priestly sacrificing, and thus preparing ourselves under the direction of the great High-priest for the glorious work that the heavenly Father has arranged for us in his wonderful plan.

"O ABSALOM, MY SON, MY SON!"

2 SAM. 18:24-33.—NOVEMBER 8.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"A foolish son is a grief to his father."*—Prov. 17:25.

Utterly surprised and unprepared for Absalom's unfilial conduct was King David, when he learned of his son's rebellion and realized its extensiveness and how the hearts of the people had been stolen from him by his son's perfidy. He at once perceived that no other course was open to him than that of flight. It was a time of peace, and he had not a large retinue of soldiers at the Capital, but merely what might be termed a body guard. With these and the loyal officers of the court he fled across the Jordan, where he had time and opportunity to gather a few reinforcements and where he might feel comparatively secure in the small but strongly fortified city called Mahanaim. Meantime Absalom displayed his contempt for his father and his household and thus, so to speak, showed the people that the rebellion was one in which no quarter or recon-

ciliation was to be expected. With a large army which had cast in their fortunes with the rebellious prince and expected under his patronage to reap large results of honor and influence and power as successors to the officers of the kingdom, Absalom pursued King David with haste. There seems to have been no doubt whatever that he was bent on capping the climax of his disgraceful course by the murder of his father. His pursuit with a large army meant this.

Although King David's army was much the smaller of the two, they probably had the advantage in that many of the King's guard were men of special ability and large experience as warriors, according to the methods of their time. The King was persuaded not to go with the army, whereupon he divided it into three parts under three of his ablest adherents. These met Absalom's army, and attacking it from different quarters, the battle resulted in the slaughter of 20,000 of Absalom's forces and the routing of the remainder, including Absalom himself, who, being caught by the "head" in the low branches of a tree, was unhorsed and left helpless, and was slain by Joab, the chief of King David's generals.

Here our present lesson opens. Near the watch tower of the wall of Mahanaim King David awaits news of the battle, while the watchman in the tower reports that he sees a messenger running, and, later, another. The first he recognizes as the son of his friend the priest, and according to the custom of the times he interpreted this to mean that the tidings were good, because a good man had been sent with them. This custom should still be in force amongst the Lord's people—that a good man would always seek to bear a good message. The words of the mouth and the meditations of the heart of all who are loyal to the Lord should be good—only good, ever good. Thus it is that God chooses not the worldly wise neither the worldly great, but those who are loyal at heart to him as his mouthpieces: and it should more and more be recognized that the bad tidings of great misery are not of the Lord, that those who bear them are not bearing the Lord's message, and that if they had the right attitude of heart toward the Lord, and the right spirit of love, they would not have the disposition to bear an evil message which maligns the divine character in a manner that even the depraved would resent if it were charged against them.

When the first runner arrived he announced in a general way the success of the King's army. Then the King—in harmony with his parting words to the soldiers, that they should spare Absalom in any event—inquired first of all, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" As we are shocked with the unfilial conduct of Absalom toward his father, we are deeply impressed with the father love of David for his erring son, who sought not only his throne but his life What was the difference between the two characters? which was the more noble, the more honorable, the more admirable? There could be but one answer from any quarter on this subject; even David's enemies could not read this record without an appreciation of his grandeur of soul He was more anxious for Absalom than for his throne apparently—yea, and for his own life. The difference between the two characters can be accounted for in only one way, namely—that David was a man after God's own heart, one who had passed through trying experiences and learned profitable lessons, one in whom the spirit of love had been considerably developed. Absalom, on the contrary, is an illustration of selfishness and ambition which stooped to anything to accomplish its ends. David, although not a member of the house of sons of which Christ is the head, was one of the noble members of the house of servants of which Moses was the head—Heb 3 5, 6.

Some have esteemed that the answer of Ahimaaz was an untruth, intended to soften the facts so as not to wound the feelings of the King; but we cannot agree to this. We hold that, according to the record, the young man told the truth, and we believe that it would be much better for everybody if all mankind similarly confined themselves in their replies to important questions to the strict meaning of the word "know." The reply was that he had seen a commotion, knew that the battle was ended, knew that the victory was on the King's side, but knew nothing more. True, he had heard Joab say something about the King's son, but that was hearsay and not knowledge, and the young man answered the King properly when he said that he did not *know* the answer to the query about Absalom. The Lord's people above all others should be particular to discriminate between knowledge and belief and hearsay, etc.

The second runner, Cushi, or literally a Cushite—that is, a negro—was probably one of the king's household servants who engaged in the battle. He quickly told the whole story, and it was upon hearing thus of Absalom's death that the King was moved to violent grief, and gave utterance to words which stand as amongst the most pathetic on the pages of history. "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

The pity is that the King's love for his son did not take a more practical course at the proper time. He was an indulgent rather than a wise father. Evidently the flash and glitter of the young man's natural talents not only charmed the people but charmed his father, so that he practically had whatever he wanted of everything, the King failing to apply to his son the valuable lessons which he himself would learn, to the effect that the reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and that true happiness and true prosperity are only to be found in this path, which wisdom indicates. His unwise love for his son led him to feel that the young man must sow his wild oats and should not be much restrained, and now when he witnessed the reaping of those wild oats his heart was convulsed with sorrow. And so it has been with many a father and many a mother who, although truly the Lord's, fail to apply to their children the lessons which the Lord has taught them by distressing experiences. It is unnecessary to comment upon the unwisdom of such love and to point the moral to Christian parents. It points itself, and Solomon the wise son expresses it tenderly when he said, in the words of our Golden Text, that "A foolish son is a grief to his father," and noted again that "He who spareth the rod hateth his son" From the practical standpoint, however the matter may appear to the superficial observer, the essence of wisdom is contained in his further observation, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Parents seem not to fully appreciate the fact that in the training of their children, either in the right way or in the wrong way, they are laying out for themselves either joys or sorrows for the future.

King David's inquiry respecting his son, "Is the young man safe?" should be the inquiry of every father and every mother respecting their sons and their daughters: but let them not do as David did—wait until sin has sprouted and blossomed and brought forth evil fruitage. Let them begin by realizing their duty toward their posterity in their earliest infancy. The duty of Christian parents toward their children is next to their duty to the Lord,—indeed the Lord has indicated that parental duty ranks first among all the earthly obligations of the saints.

"THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD"

PSALM 23.—NOV 15.

Jehovah is my Shepherd, is the Prophet's sentiment, and our Lord's explanation of the matter further is that the great Shepherd's Son has been given full charge of the sheep. (John 10:1-16) Not all mankind, however, are sheep, or have the Shepherd's care. In the present time only those who have heard the Shepherd's voice and responded to his call to become his sheep are of his flock, and his word on the subject is that it is a little flock, to whom it will be the Father's good pleasure eventually to give the kingdom in joint-heirship with his Son, their "Chief Shepherd." Then will come the time referred to by our Lord when "other sheep" will be found. The entire Millennial age, with all the forces and blessings of the heavenly kingdom, will be devoted to the finding of the other sheep. Our Lord's words are,—"Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold [not of the little flock of this Gospel age]; them also I must bring [in due time to a knowledge of the truth and to the full privileges of sheep], and there shall be one flock and one shepherd." (John 10:16) Eventually all of God's creatures on various planes of being shall be recognized as one family of God, as it is written of our Lord, "In whom the whole family of God both in heaven and in earth are named." (Eph. 3:15) And again, "He shall gather together in one all things in Christ both in heaven and on earth." (Eph. 1:10) However, though it may be interesting and helpful and profitable to understand something of our great Shepherd's generous plans for the future, our interest centers chiefly in the little flock of the present time, to which alone this lesson refers in many of its particulars.

Professor George Adam Smith gives the following interesting description of the difference between the shepherds of sheep in olden times in Palestine and the care of sheep as is known to us of the present day. This is an important point to be remembered, as it was the eastern shepherd who illustrated our heavenly Shepherd's care for his little flock. Professor Smith says:—

"An Eastern pasture is very different from the narrow meadows and dyked hillsides with which we are familiar at home. It is vast and often practically boundless; it has to be extensive, for the greater part of it is barren—in fact, the Hebrew word for desert and for pasture is the same. The most of it consists of dry, stony soil, out of which, for the great part of the year the sun has sucked all life. In this monotony the breaks are few, and consist of paths more or less fitful, gorges or thickets where wild beasts lurk, and oases of pleasant grass and water. Now in such a landscape of mirage, illusive paths, lurking terrors, and infrequent herbage, it is evident that the person and character of the shepherd must mean a great deal more to the sheep than it means to sheep with us. With us a flock of sheep without a shepherd is a common experience: every day we may see them left to themselves in a secure field or scattered over a side hill, with a far-traveling wire fence to keep them from straying. But I do not remember ever to have seen in the East a flock of sheep without a shepherd."

Doubtless as the Prophet David penned this Psalm, his mind went back to his father's flock and to his own experience as its shepherd, concerning which we incidentally have the mention that while protecting it he slew a lion and a bear. Under heavenly inspiration the prophet pictures the Almighty One as the great caretaker watching over and protecting from harm all whom he recognizes as his "sheep." Nothing can be farther from the sentiment of this prophecy and illustration than the growing prevalent sentiment which recognizes Jehovah God as the shepherd and father of all mankind, and which is frequently voiced in the words, "Fatherhood of God, and brotherhood of man." This view ignores man's will and also ignores the Lord's Word, which declares that there are goats and wolves as well as sheep; that while some have become children of God, it is through faith and "adoption," and that many from the divine standpoint, so far from being recognized as children of God, are referred to as "of your father, the devil, for his works you do." (John 8:44) Originally our race, represented by father Adam in sinless perfection, was recognized as related to Jehovah, but the breaking of this relationship by man's wilful disobedience and departure from God is clearly recognized in the Scripture, so that none are recognized as sons of God today unless they have been begotten again, begotten from above. Nor is it our hope that any in the future will be recognized as sons of God or as sheep of the Lord's fold except as they shall heartily renounce sin, and, being granted knowledge of divine grace, shall heartily accept the same and "follow on to know the Lord."

Applying the psalm to the little flock, all of its provisions fit most minutely. Because the Lord is our Shepherd, we shall not want. Those who are proper sheep will submit their wills to the shepherd's will and trust wholly to his guidance, and so doing are relieved of that anxious craving so common to the children of the world and which is never satisfied, but the more it gets, the more it wants. The Lord's sheep appreciate the heavenly things more than the earthly, and their wants in this respect are more than supplied when they accept by faith the divine assurance that

"No good thing will he withhold
From sheep which stray not from his fold."

They have given up every earthly interest in exchange for the heavenly, and, realizing their own insufficiency and lack of judgment, they are trusting to the Lord to grant them such experiences, leadings, trials, difficulties, blessings, etc., in this present life as will be for their highest good, and as would work out for them a share of the glorious things of the future to which they have been called. The wants of this class are not of the kind after which the Gentiles seek, and for which they are anxious and strive. They in their hearts rejoice in the sentiment expressed by the poet, "Jesus has satisfied, Jesus is mine."—Matt. 6:32.

Although the experiences of the Lord's sheep include many trials in the parched wilderness of sin, yet he graciously gives them restful experiences in oases of divine favor. These are not always accompanied with immunities from trial, as the world would view the matter, but certainly are seasons of rest and refreshment—to such an extent that the Lord's sheep may truthfully say that they have "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" ruling in their hearts, notwithstanding outward trials, difficulties, perplexities and adversities. Which of the Lord's sheep has not found such green pasturage of spiritual refreshment in his private devotions and studies of divine things? which of them has not experienced similar refreshment and rest and nourishment from the Master's provision that his sheep shall not forsake the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is—for the study of the Word, for prayer, for testimonies of the Lord's goodness and mercy? All these opportunities and privileges, whether personally experienced or whether they are yet only in the mind through the medium of the printed page, are provisions made for the sheep by the great Shepherd. Those sheep which find no enjoyment in such privileges and blessings and refreshments have reason to question their faithfulness in following the lead of the Shepherd. And those sheep which, finding such opportunities, decline to use them, thus give evidence of lack of harmony with the Shepherd's gracious intentions and wisdom.

The "still waters" are contrasted with the rushing torrent of the mountain slope—still, not in the sense of stagnancy, but rather smooth flowing. At the latter only could the sheep receive proper refreshment. So applying the thought to the little flock, we find that the great Shepherd leads us away from the strifes of worldly ambition, from greatness and power and riches and honors highly esteemed amongst men, but does not lead us to stagnancy—rather to spiritual ambitions which bring with them a restfulness and refreshment of soul obtainable from no other source. The streams of truth and grace are living, but comparatively quiet, waters. As the Prophet intimates, these are not to be found by the sheep alone; to find them requires the leading of the spirit. Let us give diligence to his voice, remembering his Word—that his sheep hear his voice and follow him. Let us discriminate, discern his voice, with its truthful accent, so different from the voice of error. Strangers true sheep will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers. They do not like its money ring, or its worldly ambition ring, or its priestcraft tone, or its contradiction of the spirit of the divine message and method.

"He restoreth my soul." The Prophet does not refer to a restoration of body or of physical health, but a restoration of soul, being. Some of the Lord's most precious saints have been weary and faint and troubled—even the dear Redeemer fainted under his cross, and was neither kept whole or made whole miraculously on the occasion. The application of the Prophet's words to the Christian experience would make these experiences, called restoring of soul or being, to correspond with our justification to life. All our lives were forfeited under the divine sentence, and by faith a complete restitution or restoration of soul is granted to the believer, that he might have something to offer in sacrifice to the Lord, "holy, acceptable" (Rom. 12:1), and that in this sacrifice service he may walk in the footsteps of the great Shepherd who lay down his life for the sheep. Thus are the true sheep led in right paths, in proper paths, advantageous to their spiritual development, though frequently trying and difficult to them according to the flesh. This favor and blessing and opportunity comes to them not for their own sakes or worthiness, but through the Lord's grace —"for his name's sake."

The whole world is walking in the valley of the shadow of death. Mountain tops of life, of affection, were left by the race six thousand years ago, when Father Adam fell from his harmony with God to the plane of sin and death. The valley of sin carries with it the shadow of death, the penalty of sin. In the broad road the whole human family still walks; and even though the Shepherd leads his flock upward, and in the reverse direction from the course of the world, nevertheless, according to the flesh, they are still in the world, in this valley of the shadow of death. However, the true sheep, hearing the voice of the good Shepherd who gave his life for the sheep, have learned to be neither careless and indifferent as are some, nor to be in fear and doubt and perplexity as are the majority. These on the contrary fear no evil. They realize indeed that the penalty of sin is upon the race, but they realize also that divine love has provided a redemption. They realize that the whole world is going down to sheol, to hades, but that God has made provision that the good Shepherd shall deliver his little flock from the power of the grave in the first resurrection, and that subsequently all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth to a full, fair, reasonable, proper judgment—the testing respecting their willingness to be his sheep and to follow him and to attain everlasting life through him. The sheep of the little flock fear no evil because of the Lord's favor, because he is with them, on their side, and has shown his favor in the redemption price already paid. He is with them, too, in his word of promise—his assurance that death shall not mean extinction of life, but merely, until the resurrection, an undisturbed sleep in Jesus. What wonder that these can walk through the valley of the shadow of death singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord, calling upon their souls with all that is within them to praise and laud and magnify his great and holy name, who loved us and bought us with his precious blood, and has called us to joint-heirship with our dear Redeemer.

"His rod and his staff, they comfort me." As the Shepherd's crook was used to assist the sheep out of difficulties, to defend it from its too powerful enemies and to chasten it when

inattentive, and as all of these uses of the rod were for the sheep's interest and welfare, so with the Lord's little flock and their Shepherd and his rod of help, defense and chastisement. The true sheep learn to love the providences of the Shepherd and are comforted by them. Knowing the Shepherd's power and his watchful care, they realize that all things are working together for good to them because they are his sheep. Why should they not be comforted; strengthened, encouraged?

The Psalm diverges here and leaves the figure of the sheep and the Shepherd, adopting instead the illustration of a mighty lord who spreads a sumptuous feast for his humbler friend. In olden times an active hospitality meant much, and for a noble-man to receive one as his guest meant responsibility for his safety; and so the thought is that we, as the Lord's people, are accepted of him, counted as friends, are made to sit down to a bountiful feast, secure from the enmity of those who would injure us—secure from the great adversary and all the wicked spirits in high places mentioned by the Apostle (Eph. 6:12) —secure so long as we are under the care of our great friend, our heavenly Father. The bounties of our table may indeed include some earthly good things, better or worse than those of the natural average man; but all of these, whatever they may be, accepted with joy and thanksgiving, are appreciated by those who recognize them as part and parcel of the bounties of the friend above all others.

All religious people make more or less claim to spiritual food, and the various parts and factions of Christendom especially boast that they have much advantage every way, and that their tables are spread with divine truth, promises, etc., food from which they claim to receive their strength. But what a variety of these tables there are and how different are the viands, doctrinally. The food on most of them seems to have been spoiled in the preparation. Some of it is sad, some of it is sour, and much of it is musty. For the most part it originated in "the dark ages," and the dear friends who sit down to these tables find that they have little appetite for such food, and we do not blame them. Rather, we would attract their attention to the generous, bountiful supply of divine truth which the Lord himself is dispensing to the household of faith, "things new and old," but all of them pure, sweet, delicious, grand. This table is open to all those who love the Lord with all their heart, mind, soul and strength—better than they love houses or lands, parents or children, husband or wife, lodge or society or sectarian system or self.

Is it strange that those so highly favored of the Lord and recognized as his guests and fed at his table should be hated by enemies? It would seem strange to us if it were not for the assurance of the Master himself, that whosoever will live godly will suffer persecution in this present time, and for the illustration of this in the Master's own experience, that it was the professedly godly, influential, great and nominally religious that persecuted him to death. We are not surprised, then, to find that our table is spread in the midst of enemies that now surround us on every hand.

The anointing of the head of the guest with oil was a part of the hospitality of olden times. The antitype of this with us is the outpouring of the holy Spirit upon all this class—this little flock, the body of Christ, of which he is the Head, Chief, the Shepherd, the Leader.

The fulness of the cup, running over, has a double signification. It is a cup of joy and a cup of sorrow, and in both respects it overflows. He who would partake of the joys of the Lord must also partake of his cup of suffering; we must suffer with him if we would reign with him. But we count the sufferings of this present time as not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed in us, and hence we are enabled to rejoice in tribulation, so that as the tribulations will overflow the rejoicing likewise overflows, and with the Apostle we can say, Rejoice, and again I say rejoice!

The goodness and mercy which we anticipate beyond the veil has its beginning here already and is thus to be appreciated. Whoever knows nothing of the joys of the Lord in the present time will evidently not be prepared for the joys of the Lord in the kingdom, whatever blessings and joys he may attain to under the administration of the kingdom during the Millennial age. There is then joy and rejoicing granted to the Lord's faithful ones, not a momentary matter connected with their first acceptance of the Lord and their consecration of themselves to him. The goodness and mercy of the Lord is not to be looked back to as a thing of the remote past, but is to be recognized and appreciated as a thing of the present. Day by day God's goodness and mercy follow us, refresh us, strengthen us, bless us.

The highest hope to which we dare aspire is that of final union with our great Shepherd, our heavenly Father, and the good Shepherd his Son, in the heavenly state, in our Father's house on high, one mansion or plane of which is intended for the little flock, separate and distinct from the mansion or plane provided for the restitution class of the Millennial age. The end of all our highest ambitions will be attained, and far more than realized, when we shall be like our Lord, see him as he is, and share his glory in the Father's house.

"WINE IS A MOCKER"

PROV. 20:1; 23:20, 21, 29-35.—Nov. 22.

In this lesson wine personifies alcohol, which in one form or another mocks every man who becomes its friend and companion. Realizing this, surely it is true that "Whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Evidently many of our race are not wise, for millions are thus deceived, notwithstanding the illustrations they have on every hand of wine's deceived friends, wrecked socially, morally, physically and financially.

The Department of Labor in Washington recently issued a bulletin showing the returns made by employers in various industries in the United States regarding the drinking habits of their employees. Of seven thousand employers who answered the question whether, in engaging employees, they discriminated against men who drank, forty-four hundred replied in the affirmative and only sixteen hundred in the negative. The returns divided according to industries were as follows:—

	Discriminated against	Not discriminated
Mining	56 per cent	44 per cent
Agriculture	72 per cent	28 per cent
Manufacturing	79 per cent	21 per cent
Trade	88 per cent	21 per cent
Transportation	97 per cent	3 per cent

About two thousand employers forbade any use of intoxicants by employees of certain grades, and fifteen hundred forbade it when employees were on duty. We quote:—

"It is worthy of note that the grades of work in which employers require that no liquor shall be used are always those entailing responsibility. For example, in agriculture it was the foremen, managers, etc., who were required to be abstainers; in manufacturing it was the engineer, fireman, etc.; in transportation, the trainmen, motormen, etc., conductors and the like. It will be perceived that the trades most highly organized show the most disposition to prohibit the use of liquor. Railroads, for example, stand at the top of the list, and agriculture very nearly at the foot, though the temperance sentiment among farmers is vastly stronger than among railroad managers."

The liquor question seems to be less a dispute respecting the wisdom of intoxication and its unprofitableness and more a question of personal liberty. A love of liberty is born in every man, no matter how depraved he may be otherwise, and yet it cannot be disputed that liberty can be used properly only under perfect conditions or under restraints. If all men were perfect, well balanced mentally, and without depraved appetite, and if the surroundings were all perfect, they would need no divine laws. Under present imperfect conditions all lovers of restraints of any kind, though they would still be subject to liberty should appreciate the necessity of self-control, restraint of liberty—especially those who, as new creatures, have voluntarily placed themselves under divine instruction. Even those who feel the greatest possible confidence in their strength of will should remember that the will grows stronger by its exercise in opposition, and that where it is not thus actively engaged habit is apt to supplant it and become the master. Furthermore, seeing as we do the large proportion of the human family who admittedly are weak in will power and self-control, and realizing the force of example upon such, those who feel themselves strong, in proportion as they love their neighbor as themselves will feel disposed to forego the exercise of liberties which would have the effect of stumbling their weaker neighbors. A noted writer has said:

"My reader, beware of habit! Habit is the most significant word to be found in the English vocabulary. Get an artist to paint it in letters of fire and hang it on the walls of your chamber, where your eye shall catch its message when you retire and where it may greet you again with the rising sun. Gaze upon it until it is deeply cut into the sanctuary of your inner being, just where the lamp of life may cast its ruddy light over it. Habit is to be your curse or benediction; it is either to conquer you or enable you to conquer. Today it

is transforming you into a sycophant or a prince of freedom. Today you are either girding your soul with fetters of sorrow or building a chariot that will conduct you to paradise. Good habits are as potent for emancipation as vile ones are for slavery and anguish. One may resolutely form habits of purity, honesty, fidelity, till he breathes the air of divinity as his native air;—as he eventually becomes expert and master in melody, by years of inexorable drill."

The power of habit is unquestionably a great one either for good or evil, but let us not forget that the human will, however strong or persistently exercised,, can only reach its highest attainment and most favorable results when placed under discipleship to Christ—to be taught of God.

The Christian Endeavor World gives the following information regarding the use of liquors in various civilized countries. From this it appears that although the liquor habit has reached terrible proportions in this land and is blighting millions of lives annually, nevertheless the United States is fifteenth in the list. We thank God that it is no worse, and yet long for the time when our prayer, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth," shall be answered in the establishment of the Millennial kingdom under which Satan shall be bound, and all necessary restrictions be put into operation, to the intent that the world of mankind may be uplifted everywhere and brought to a knowledge of the salvation made possible for all through the dear Redeemer's death. The quotation follows:—

"A table recently published showing the amount of all kinds of liquors consumed per capita in twenty-three nations, throws startling but not astonishing light on the much-talked-of commercial invasion of European markets by America.

"At the head of this list of nations, the heaviest in drinking in the world is the Argentine Republic. Close after it come France, Italy, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Great Britain,—the nations that are feeling most keenly the commercial aggressiveness of the United States. Fifteenth in the list comes the United States, the commercial rival whose success is making all Europe uneasy. In other words, the difference between successful competition and failure lies largely in the difference between the 6.4 gal. of pure alcohol in all kinds of liquors consumed per capita in France, the 2.63 in Germany, the 1.96 in Austria, the 3.47 in Belgium, the 2.52 in Great Britain, and the 1.26 in the United States."

"At a recent meeting in Birmingham, England, addressed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the presiding officer, Mr. Edwin Smith, said:—'If we spent on alcohol the same per capita as America, our drinking bill would be about £66,000,000 less than it now is. We cannot succeed commercially while we are handicapped in this way to the extent of forty-eight per cent.'"

The wise man does not say that a moderate use of alcoholic liquors brings woe, sorrow, contentions, complainings, wounds, redness of eyes, etc., and we are not to add to his words. We are to remember, however, that those who tarry long at the wine probably reach that condition through habit, that most of such begin with a fear of the consequences and the intention of becoming moderate drinkers only. Let us beware of the slavery of habit! Even the force and weight of the exceeding great and precious promises are not sufficient to hold our fallen appetites where they are being constantly fed and the chains of habit being forged; hence the wisdom of the exhortation to turn our eyes away from the smooth-flowing wine, to engage our attention and thoughts in some other direction, knowing that wine is a mocker, and that whatever it may promise of rewards and blessings at our first introduction, "at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder." Its tendency is to pervert the judgment in general, so that the eyes will see strange things, as in delirium tremens, and the heart will utter through the mouth perverse things. Surely the new nature could not thrive under such conditions, which tend even to deprave further the old nature. Hence, every new creature must beware of this seductive influence, and resist it faithfully, as he would make his calling and election sure.

Those who give way to the drinking habit become sottish, careless, as though a man were to lie down to sleep in the sea and not expect to be drowned, or as though he were to lie down upon the top of a mast and not expect to fall and be injured. To such ultimately the only desirable thing is oblivion, to be stupidly insensible to the reproof of friends and the blows of enemies. The waking idea seems to be to seek further intoxication.

A well known temperance worker, when asked to address a Sunday School, desired to bring out the fact that the drunkards of the future must come from the ranks of the boys of today. "Boys," said he, "these men that we see all around us on the street, in the stores, in this church, grow old and feeble and sooner or later will die. Who will take their places and be the men then?" After a moment's pause they answered, "We boys."

"Very true," answered the speaker. "Now, boys, you have all seen men who drank too much,—drunkards we call them. After a while they will die too. Now, boys, tell me who do you think will take their places and be the drunkards then?" Promptly came the answer, "We boys!" The thoughtless answer roused the whole school. Could there possibly be any truth in it? Alas, yes—not true of all these boys, but true of some of them.

With this thought in mind, what child of God could feel indifferent in respect to his example and instruction to all boys over whom he exercises any influence; how carefully his own boys should be guided, counselled, assisted in the formation of correct principles, correct habits.

A number of young men were one day sitting around the fire in the waiting room of an English railway, talking about a total abstinence society. Just then a policeman came in with a prisoner in handcuffs. He listened to the young men's conversation but did not give any opinion. Mr. McDonald, a minister of the Gospel, was also in the room, and hearing what the young men were saying, stepped up to the policeman and said aloud, "Pray, sir, what have you to say about temperance?" The policeman replied, "Well, all I have to say is that I never took a teetotaler to York Castle prison in my life, nor to Wakefield House of Correction either."

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE BATTLE OF THE GREAT DAY

As illustrating the progress being made toward the condition described in the Bible as that of the immediate future, when "every man's hand shall be against his neighbor" (Zech. 14:13; Ezek. 32:21), we give below without comment copies of two circulars being widely distributed among manufacturers—urging them to organize for mutual protection against the "unreasonable" demands of organized labor. These purport to go forth from *The Press of the National Association of Manufacturers*. The two circulars follow:—

WHITHER ARE WE DRIFTING?

At the late meeting of the American Federation of Labor, held in New Orleans, the following resolution came within four hundred votes of being adopted:

Whereas, Capital being the product of all the toilers of the human race, and as wages can never be regarded as the full equivalent for labor performed, and since it is the mission of the trades-unions to protect the wage earner against oppression, and to fully secure the toilers' disenthrallment from every species of injustice; therefore be it

Resolved, That this twenty-second annual convention of the American Federation of Labor advise the working people to organize their economic and political power to secure for labor the full equivalent of its toil and the OVERTHROW OF THE WAGE SYSTEM, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDUSTRIAL COOPERATIVE DEMOCRACY.

This resolution was introduced by delegate Max Hayes, one of the radical socialists from Cleveland, Ohio. In the final action on this resolution the socialistic element almost secured control of the convention. The struggle lasted a full day. The debate on the resolution was the most exciting of the meeting. John Mitchell's United Mine Workers' organization cast one thousand eight hundred and four votes solidly for this resolution. This is the organization which evoked so much maudlin sentiment and brought the whole country to its knees in the Anthracite strike. It is confidently prophesied that the socialists will be in full control of the Trades-Union movement in the United States by the time of the next A. F. of L. Convention.

Max Hayes' resolution means that there is to be an attack upon the productive wealth of the country. Productive wealth, as interpreted by the socialists, means capital, factories, plants, machinery, railroads, etc. The socialists mean to take possession of all the money and private properties. Not content with getting their share of the consumable wealth of the nation, clothing, food, etc., which is being distributed more generously and cheaply to the people than ever before in the history of

the world, the followers of Hayes are determined to seize upon all the productive wealth. It has been estimated that if all the productive wealth of the country were to be divided up equally among the inhabitants of the United States that there would be but Two Hundred dollars for each person. Yet Hayes and his followers are determined to seize this two hundred dollars if they can get the backing. The basis of this movement is human greed and envy. Unless this movement is checked, it will lead to enormous industrial damage to the United States, for nothing but chaos and anarchy can come from a proposition to seize the private property of individuals. These are the people who are demanding that the political and commercial destinies of the United States be intrusted into their hands!

Is it time to organize?

ANTI-INJUNCTION LAW OR REBELLION

The special committee which reported on President Gompers' annual report at the recent American Federation of Labor meeting at New Orleans, said in connection with the anti-conspiracy bill now pending in Congress:

"The use of injunction in labor disputes is becoming more and more general; its value to the employer and its danger to the workmen is becoming better and better understood. It is an effort to retain through judicial decisions and orders, the power over the working people, which has long been legislatively surrendered, and seems to have as its governing cause the concept that the ownership of a mine, a factory or a means of transportation carries with its ownership so much of the working power of the laboring class as will make such factory, mine or means of transportation profitable to its owner. This concept has in it an idea of peonage (the word "Peon" is of Spanish-American origin, meaning a debtor held by his creditor in a form of qualified servitude, to work out a debt), which, if permitted to grow, will re-establish peonage in its most objectionable form. If through the use of the equity power vested in the Courts, our rights as workers to quit work at will, and to induce others to quit with us, can be taken away, then the peaceable evolution toward industrial democracy is cut off, and the workers will be compelled to look to more REVOLUTIONARY measures for redress of existing grievances, and the obtaining of better conditions in the future. If we are permitted to withdraw our labor in unison from any establishment where we have grievances to be redressed, then the development may go on the lines of the development in England toward political democracy, through parliamentary control over taxation and appropriation. If it is to be taken away, then we might as well now realize that PEACEABLE DEVELOPMENT will stop, and the POLITICAL HISTORY OF FRANCE WILL BE THE INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY. For these reasons your Committee recommends that NO EFFORTS BE SPARED TO INDUCE THE LEGISLATIVE POWER TO CURTAIL THE JUDICIARY BRANCH OF OUR GOVERNMENT BY THE ENACTMENT OF THE ANTI-INJUNCTION BILL."

The report of this Committee was enthusiastically concurred in, and so well pleased were the delegates with the President's attitude towards employers, that immediately, thereafter, upon proper motion, Gompers' salary was increased $500 a year.

Thus it will be seen that Organized Labor never intends to stop, until it can secure class legislation by which the BOYCOTT and the PICKET are to be LEGALIZED, and every employer in this country be placed at the mercy of agitators, who hold for the employing class nothing but envy and hatred. This program of terrorization and despoliation can only be met with an organization which will embrace every manufacturer in the United States.

Is it not time to organize?

RELIGIOUS BASEBALLISTS

Six Washington City churches formed a Base Ball League, and during the past season contested *every day, except Sunday*, from May 18 to July 25. Let us hope that this liberal attention to "bodily exercise" did not trench too heavily upon the hours usually set apart for prayer and the study of the divine Word. The following churches composed the Association:

Calvary Baptist church,
Fourth Presbyterian church,
Gunton-Temple Presbyterian church,
Sixth Presbyterian church,
Temple Baptist church,
Wesley Methodist Episcopal church,

MAKING HADES TOO HOT

A passion for accuracy seems to beset a revivalist in Texas. His idea of the best way to get people to heaven is to frighten them about hell, and he gives them exact facts. For instance he tells them that the temperature of hell is four hundred and fifty-three degrees Fahrenheit. On what he bases his calculations we do not know. But this we do know, and we wish to state it for the comfort of his hearers: If they fell into such a heat they would not know whether it was hot or cold, and there would be absolutely no feeling of any kind, but instantaneous annihilation.

It is a comfort to think that today the man who talks about the temperature of hell seems simply a humorous creature and is taken no more seriously than an old nurse with ghost stories. As to the man who tries to preach the hideous theory that in frightful torments of heat human beings are kept alive and constantly tortured by a "merciful Creator," his statements are now considered blasphemous. No man would dare to make them, save to the most ignorant and degraded audience.—*Exchange.*

BISHOP FOWLER ON MONEY AND SALVATION

"Salvation is reduced to a question of dollars and cents."
"Now, don't misunderstand me. The goblins'll get you if you do."

These were the characteristic words of Bishop Charles H. Fowler in his address to the ministers and laymen of the Cincinnati Methodist Episcopal church Conference Saturday morning. Bishop Fowler said further: "We have the doctrine, the Redeemer, the experience, the schools; we have the railroads, the steamships; we have masters of language—all we need is money. We have everything else. A famous New York laymen once said, 'If you will give me enough money, I will make a Christian city of New York in thirty years.' I say to you, 'Give me money and I will make a Christian city of Cincinnati in thirty years.' I would let the old sinners go anywhere they please, but I would save the young ones and the little ones. You can't make a Christian city of Cincinnati on one-half a cent per person. The world must be conquered, and money is needed with which to do it. I want you laymen of the Cincinnati conference to be diligent in business. Get the money. The more you have the easier it will be to get still more. A soul set on fire for the Infinite God can't get money enough. I want you to believe all I have said. Do as much as you can without utterly disrupting your moral natures."—*Daily News.*

ANOTHER WAY OF "COUNTING THE COST"

Discussing the cost of "soul saving" as between the expenses of large and small churches the Brooklyn Standard Union says:

From 248 churches, evenly divided into large and small, it is shown that the cost of new converts is almost twice as much in the former as in the latter, ranging from $262.22 to $150.14, though the average annual expenditure of each member when safely in the fold is much more nearly equal—$14.09 against $13.05.

Of course the inevitable question, Does it pay? must be met by the churches, as well as by every other form of human organization and activity, and as with all other forms of the higher and better types, the attempt to answer it would be idle. One might as well ask, Does the family, the State, society at large pay? There are fortunately some equations of life in which the factors are not convertible, and where to ask the question is to admit that its answer is impossible. A better form of the inquiry may be found in a book once read more than it is today, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" It may be just as well once in a while to admit that there are some things which cannot be expressed in the terms of daily business, that cannot be measured by dollars and cents, and that the institutions, no matter by what name called, which go to make the world better worth living in, even though they require money and a good deal of it, are worth all they cost. The little churches, particularly, and those who love them and work for them, may well take heart.

PRIZE-FIGHTING COMMENDED

1 TIM. 6:12.

"Life is a battle," some one has truly said. We see amongst the brute creation a constant struggle for existence, and it is the same with humanity. In business competition it is a battle; in politics the strife goes on continually; in the family, between the parents and the children, there is frequently strife for mastery; and throughout the world it is largely each family

for itself and each individual for himself, all this strife being along the lines of ambition and selfishness, sometimes almost to the extent of necessity.

The Lord's soldiers were recruited from these miserable conditions, but to another and different warfare—a war against selfishness, avarice, coveteousness and all unrighteous, all unloving methods, all sin.—The Captain of our salvation is our exemplar, whose methods of warfare we are to copy. Although he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, he was an inveterate foe to sin, and laid down his life in opposing it. All who would be accepted as followers of the cross must follow his example—"faithful even unto death"—if they would have the great prize, the crown of life.

As we look at the world of which we once were a part, "Children of wrath even as others," we see that all of its strife is for some purpose. The politician strives for emoluments and sometimes for honor; the merchant strives for affluence and wealth; the struggles in the social arena are for place and influence. These are their prizes, and in their efforts to attain their ideals, many are the sacrifices that are endured, many are the risks that are run, many are the night vigils and careful plans and schemes and plottings. Nevertheless, few of those who strive ever attain to their hearts' desires. The prize eludes their grasp; and the more fortunate ones who do grasp the prizes find that there is much bitterness connected with the success, much disappointment as to the real pleasure accompanying them. The Apostle compares these earthly ambitions of the world with the higher ambitions of the soldiers of the Lord's army. He points out that those who strive in earthly matters, either as race runners or as prize fighters in any department of the strife of earth, put themselves to certain tests of patience, endurance and self-denial in their endeavors to attain their ambitions; and he indicates that much more the soldiers of the cross should highly esteem the great prize for which we are called to fight the good fight—the prize of life eternal. The Apostle says, "Every man that striveth is temperate in all things: now they do it to attain a corruptible crown [reward], but we an incorruptible."

These who strive for earthly prizes do so in the face of much uncertainty. Every politician admits the strong probability of his defeat; every one who seeks wealth will acknowledge a strong probability that he will fail in his fight for it; but not so with the soldiers of the cross. The prize is not only superlatively great and grand and incorruptible, but it is a certainty, as the Apostle adds, "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air." We know that faithfulness as followers of our Captain will bring results not only blessed to ourselves, but results which will be under the Lord's providences a blessing to all the families of the earth. It is a view of this certainty on our part as to the results and the grandeur thereof that the Apostle intimates that we, as soldiers of the cross, should be willing to endure much greater hardness and self-denial and buffeting for the sake of the cause we represent than would those who strive for the earthly crowns and prizes. And if they practice self-denial and disciplines late and early, in season and out of season, when convenient and when inconvenient, whether of food and drink if preparing for some physical contest, or of comforts and conveniences and pleasures if for political or business contests, much more should we not be slothful in our business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, fighting the good fight of faith, laying hold on eternal life as a sure thing, not an uncertainty. The Apostle applies this thought too, saying, "I keep my body under [its ambitions, appetites, desires], and bring it into subjection [to the new mind]: lest by any means when I have preached to others I myself should be a castaway [rejected from being a member of the little flock]."—1 Cor. 9:25-28.

The first essential in becoming a soldier of the cross is a proper understanding of the only terms of enlistment—that it is not for an occasion, nor for a year, but for life. Many err on this point, and after fighting faithfully in a few skirmishes they seem to have the impression that they have fulfilled the conditions of their enlistment, and drift into some other service, some other kind of fighting, or into a slothful, indifferent ease in the presence of the enemy and the evil against which they pledged themselves to war a good warfare even unto death. Such occasionally get revived under the stimulus of the Gospel or mental excitement, and for a time fight a little more, only to relapse again into indifference and slothfulness. Some even plume themselves upon these repeated reënlistments and purpose further reënlistments before they die, not discerning that this is a wrong view of the situation—that no volunteers are accepted save upon the terms of the Captain: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Such need to see that participation in a few battles is not the condition of our call and enlistment, and that the rewards—glory, honor and immortality—which the Lord has promised to the faithful cannot be expected by those who do not fight the good fight faithfully and continuously. We are not here discussing what portion will come to those who are careless in respect to the terms of their enlistment. We are not saying whether their portion will be in the "great company" or elsewhere; but we are seeking to make clear that none can be counted worthy of a place in the little flock, in the glory of the Kingdom, unless he shall have the proper appreciation of his enlistment, and have been, at heart at least, thoroughly loyal to and active in the defence of the principles for which his covenant stands committed—the principles of righteousness at any cost, even unto death.

It will be found a great help to the weaknesses of the fallen nature to have understandingly made a full consecration of the will,—a full enlistment of every power and talent of mind and of body. He who takes this proper view of his consecration to the Lord and enlistment in the Lord's army, realizes that he has nothing more to give to the Lord, and hence, whatever struggle of the will he may have is all ended when he has finally decided—"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." The others, who do not so recognize the matter, have continually a battle with their wills before they can engage in any measure in defence of the truth. How important it is, therefore, that all the soldiers realize that the term of the enlistment is until death, and that there is no room for even considering any suggestion to withdraw from the battle and cease even for an hour to fight the good fight of faith.

The new recruits to the Lord's army frequently have difficulty with themselves because of the very different kind of fighting to which the Lord's soldiers are called. Used to fighting in the battle of life as members of the fallen race, a battle for the Lord along the same lines is the natural tendency—with carnal weapons, carnal objects, actions, methods, etc. Such, however, are to heed the voice of the Captain, to fight only as he directs—for righteousness instead of unrighteousness, for love and generosity, and against selfishness instead of for selfishness. They may not even take the suggestions of certain moral reformers and begin a battle for pure politics nor for total abstinence nor for social uplift—because the Captain's commands have not been along these lines. They may, nay they should, feel a deep sympathy with all of these commendable efforts, and should smile rather than frown upon them; but their time, their influence, their talents may not go in these directions, however much their sympathy may go toward them, because they are under the orders of the Captain. They are not fighting at their own charges nor to accomplish their own wills; they are not the heads of the army, but the subordinate members, and thus look for their directions to the Captain. He has called them for a special purpose, and has given them particular instructions respecting the same, and their every energy and talent, not absorbed in procuring the necessities of life, must be considered as devoted and beyond their control.

After enlistment each soldier should expect his share of the provided armor—helmet, breastplate, sandals, shield and sword; and his first work must be to put on this armor—to prepare himself. The armory from which these articles can be obtained is the Word of God, which is so well stocked that "The man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work." (2 Tim. 3:17) He who rushes into a fight without waiting to hear the Captain's command and without waiting to put on the armor provided, is certain to meet with measurable defeat and a disaster more or less consequential. Would that every soldier who enlists could realize the necessity for hearkening to the Word of God, and appropriating to himself the armor of truth which it provides. The helmet, representing the truth, which would fortify the Lord's soldiers intellectually by giving them a clear and intelligent appreciation of his plan, is necessary; the breastplate, which represents the knowledge of righteousness and an appreciation of God's provision for our covering in the great redemptive sacrifice, is also essential as a covering for our hearts, for our spiritual protection; the sandals, representing our expectation of trials and difficulties in the narrow way and our readiness to accept them all, with the assurance that they would all work for our good, are indispensible; also the shield of faith, which grows larger and larger in proportion as it is handled and used, is very important; no soldier can possibly acquit himself acceptably to the Captain except he have such a shield—without it he would be exposed to the darts of the enemy. Notwithstanding his having on the whole armor, the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, sharper than any two-edged sword, must not be forgotten. He who has not on part of the armor will be unable to keep the foes of righteousness at a respectful distance; and this sword becomes stronger and larger in the hands of the

soldier as he grasps it firmly at the hilt and uses it in his battles for the Lord and the truth.

Many soldiers in the Lord's army are surprised to learn that the Captain's name is the Prince of Peace, and that all the enlisted ones are expected to battle for peace. The matter seems at first to be contradictory. Battling is warfare, peace is the result; we are called to be soldiers and called to be peacemakers. Many of the soldiers, without waiting to learn the rules and commands of the Captain, without waiting to study the proper use of the sword of the spirit, spring courageously into the fight and begin to wound their neighbors, their friends, and sometimes their fellow soldiers in the Lord's army. This is a great mistake: this is an attempt to use the spiritual weapons in a carnal manner and is contrary to the example and word of our Captain. All such would do best to put up their swords again—to refrain from using the word of God in a belligerent manner, in a smiting way against those with whom they have to do. We must learn who is our foe, and not recklessly and blindly smite down any and everything opposing us.

But some one inquires, Are we not to smite down error, and does not this mean the smiting of those who uphold the error? We answer that those all about us who are upholding error, and those who despitefully use us and persecute us because we are on the Lord's side, are blinded by ignorance, and it is not the Lord's intention that we should fight against them; —rather we would fight for them to lift them out of their ignorance and blindness, their superstition. So the Lord expressed it when he said, "The Son of man came not to destroy men's lives," but that they might have life, and that more abundantly. He has not changed in the interim; he still has the same generous sentiment toward the poor world that he had when he died, when he tasted death for every man. The Apostle will instruct us who are our foes. He says, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers and wicked spirits in exalted positions."—Eph. 6:12.

Ah, then, our real opponents are the fallen angels, the demons; and our poor fallen fellow creatures who oppose us and who oppose righteousness do so because they are under the power of Satan, more or less blinded by his sophistries and deceptions,—as it is written, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not"—has deceived the whole world—(2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:2, 3) Our sentiment against all opposers of righteousness amongst men should therefore be that of benevolence and compassion, realizing that they are under the Adversary's power, though they know it not. And if we suffer at their hands as soldiers of the cross, our sentiments should be, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."—"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." As the Apostle Peter explained respecting those who crucified the Lord Jesus, that in ignorance they did it, so we should regard that present opposition to righteousness and to those who are on the Lord's side are largely the results of ignorance and superstition, and of the blindness which comes from the great deceiver against whom we are enlisted and seeking to fight a good fight.

Our good fight of faith, as the Apostle explains, consists in a considerable measure in our defense of the Word of God, which includes also our defense of the character of God. This is implied in the Apostle's words, "Contend [fight earnestly] for the faith once delivered unto the saints." This will mean our willingness to stand for the truth at any cost and against any number of assailants—against the creeds and theories of men, which would misrepresent the good tidings of great joy which the Lord and the Apostles have announced, and which shall, thank God, yet be unto all people. As the Apostle again says, "I am set for the defence of the truth." We can do no less than defend the truth. The truth is God's representative, Christ's representative, and hence our standard, and as true soldiers we must defend our standard even unto death. Not every truth, however; for although we may feel in sympathy with all truth yet we are enlisted under a Captain whose command indicates that it is one special line of truth that we are to defend with our lives—the truth of divine revelation—the divine message, the Gospel, the good tidings of redemption through the precious blood, forgiveness of sins, and in general the divine plan of salvation as set forth in the inspired Word. It will be noticed that he measurably ignores truth on other lines, on mathematics, on astronomy, geology, not to mention other sciences falsely so called, respecting which the Lord has given us no revelation—respecting which, therefore, his sword of truth has never been sent offensively nor defensively. It is for the "faith once delivered unto the saints," and that only, that the soldiers of the cross are to battle.

We have already noticed that the contesting is not to be with carnal weapons, even when it is for the faith once delivered unto the saints; and by carnal weapons we understand more to be meant than many at first surmise. Not merely are swords, spears and guns carnal weapons, but anger, malice, hatred, strife and a general contesting and combative spirit are all carnal weapons; and whenever these are used in defence of the Lord's good cause they do it injury instead of benefit, whatever the users may intend. It is important to remember that all the soldiers fighting in this battle for the Truth win not by injuring others, but by showing to others such noble examples of fidelity to the principles of righteousness (truth) even unto death, as will commend to them the Lord and his cause. Those who fight with anger and malice and strife, who fight carnally, misrepresent the Captain, however unintentionally, and do injury to his cause. There are many of these fighters who are not warring a good warfare, not fighting a good fight, and who will consequently fail of the chief reward—the glory, honor, immortality and joint-heirship with the Lord in the kingdom.

It may be inquired, then, How can these soldiers expect to have any battle if they abstain from carnal warfare either with their hands or their tongues, speaking only that which is good, and endeavoring so much as lieth in them to live peaceably with all men? How can such soldiers have any battle at all? who would contend with them? Surely, says one, it is not supposable that the world would battle or in any wise injure those who seek only its good, its welfare, its blessing, its peace. Nay but, we answer, the Master suffered for his fidelity to the faith once delivered, and forewarned us, saying, "Marvel not if the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." "The world loveth darkness rather than light." Guided by the Master's words, we look to see what constituted the world from his standpoint. We perceive that he could not have meant that the enemies of the saints would be wholly nor chiefly the hoodlum element of society, the thieves and thugs and murderers. Not from these are we to expect the hatred and persecution which, the Lord forewarned us, all true soldiers would experience from the world. When the Master said that the world hated him, we perceive that it was not the heathen or Gentile world, but the religious world as we might term it—the churchianity of his day—the chief priests and scribes and Pharisees who took counsel against him and who finally secured his execution. It was the same professedly religious world that through the dark ages persecuted the light and the truth even unto death, and it is the same nominally religious world, deficient in the Spirit of the Lord surely, and more or less blinded by the god of this world, which will continue to be the persecuting power against the soldiers of the cross down to the very close of this dispensation—until the last soldier of the cross shall have proven faithful unto death and the elect company shall be finished.

Here we get the broad view that the heathen religions are all of Satan, that he has misled the heathen people into gross darkness, and that whatever measure of superstition and darkness still clings to Christianity is so much the power of Satan working in and through those who are nominally and professedly the Lord's people. The soldiers of the cross all down through this Gospel age, following the example of the Captain and of his lieutenants, the apostles, have held up the banner of the truth, the light, not aggressively but defensively, and have been considered faithful in proportion as they have endured hardness with meekness and patience and long-suffering, brotherly kindness and love, not rendering evil for evil, slander for slander, reviling for reviling, but, like the Master when reviled reviled not again, but blessed their enemies, and did good to those who despitefully used them and persecuted them, praying for them and hoping for them divine mercy in the future, to the opening of the eyes of their understanding. So also we must expect it to be today.

Doubtless, in harmony with the Scriptural declaration, we may expect that in the near future all the soldiers of the cross will be exposed to much more severe attacks from the great adversary and those whom he has blinded. The attacks are to be so severe that, according to Scriptural declaration, a thousand shall fall at our side to one who will stand—the merely nominal soldiers will fall. Only the faithful, the overcoming ones, the very elect, will be able to stand in that evil day, and they because they will have on the whole armor of God provided for their protection. The Apostle mentions all deceivableness of unrighteousness in the perishing ones as being one of the characteristics of Satan's manifestation in our time. We see some of this deceivableness manifested in the many wonderful works, healings, etc., performed by the Spiritualists, Mormons, Christian Scientists and others—calculated to deceive if possible the very elect. But it will not be possible to

deceive this overcoming class, because the true soldier will take careful heed to the instructions of the Captain and will have on the whole armor of his Word for their defence and protection from all the wiles of the adversary, who, now that his kingdom is tottering to its fall, is forced to bolster up by feigning works of mercy and goodness as a garment of light.—Matt. 12:26; 2 Cor. 11:14.

Foregoing we have considered the outward battlings of the Lord's soldiers; let us notice the more secret drillings and battlings which come to each individual soldier, to test his loyalty and to develop his character.

We have already noticed that the soldier is the new creature and not the flesh, that the enlistment was a surrender of the fleshly will and the acceptance of the headship or captaincy of the Redeemer. From that moment of full surrender to the Captain, enlistment under his orders and in the service of righteousness, the new creature has experienced a conflict with its mortal body and its weaknesses, passions and tendencies for sin. The new will cannot free itself from the fleshly body, and although the reward promised by the Captain is a new body, perfect and in full harmony with himself and with righteousness, nevertheless the new will is required to demonstrate its loyalty to the Captain and to righteousness by its faithful combat with the flesh—with the desires and propensities of its own mortal body.

Here is the great and continual battle, for although the new will asserts itself and puts the body under and compels its subjection to the new mind, nevertheless the mortal body, not being actually dead, is continually coming into contact with the world and the adversary and is continually being stimulated by these and reinvigorated with earthly cares, ambitions, methods, strivings, conflicts and insubordination to our new will. No saint is without experiences of this kind—fightings without and within. It must be a fight to the finish or the great prize for which we fight will not be gained. For although the new creature masters the mortal body by the Lord's grace and strength repeatedly, nevertheless until death there can be no cessation of the conflict, for the "flesh lusteth [desireth, striveth] against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. 5:17.

The Apostle urges that we do not seek for the coöperation of the flesh, but rather anticipate in advance its opposition and proceed at once to mortify [put to death] the flesh with its affections and its desires, assuring us that as the death of the flesh will result in our begetting to the new nature, so the death of the flesh actually will be a precedent to our attaining the birth of the spirit. The apostle's words along this line are comforting to us. He says: "For which cause we faint not [in our battlings]; but though the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day [we become stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might], for our light afflictions [trials, etc., which may include these battlings with our own flesh], which are but for a moment [as compared with the eternity we hope to gain], work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. 4:16-18.

It is because the adversary works in the hearts of the children of disobedience, and because the children of the light, the soldiers of the cross, are in contact in the flesh with the children of this world, that thus the adversary is able to work powerfully against them and repeatedly to resuscitate their flesh, so that all need to follow the Apostle's course as expressed in his words, "I keep my body under"—the thought being that there is a tendency for the body, the flesh, to arise from its condition of reckoned deadness and that hence the new nature needs to be continually on the alert to maintain its ascendency, to fight the good fight of faith and to gain the prize as an overcomer. These battlings of the new mind against the flesh are a good fight in the sense that they are fightings against sin and weaknesses that belong to the fallen nature. They are a fight of faith in the sense that the entire course of the new creature is a course of faith as the Apostle says, "We walk by faith and not by sight." The new creature has faith in the Word of God, in the promises therein contained, and with the eye of faith sees the heavenly city and the crown of righteousness which the Lord has in reservation for the overcomers, joint-heirship with the Redeemer. It is a fight of faith in the sense that no one could keep up this battle against his own flesh and its propensities and desires, and come off conqueror, except as he can exercise faith in the promises and in the Lord as his helper.

Considering particularly what some of these battles of the new nature are, we suggest that many of them pertain to the weaknesses of the flesh through heredity—sin working in our mortal bodies and seeking to bring us more and more into captivity and to separate us from the Lord and the righteousness which he in every way represents. In proportion as the Lord's people receive the new mind, the gross sins of the flesh become distasteful to them—for instance, robbery, dishonesty, murder, filthy communications, etc., and when these are put away unquestionably a large victory has been gained—a great advance over what was in some hearts when first they heard the voice of the Lord. But the spirit of murder and the spirit of dishonesty often lurk in the hearts of those who have become thoroughly the Lord's people, and these dispositions hide themselves, cloak themselves in such a manner that they frequently deceive the new will, which indeed needs to be educated up to an appreciation of principles.

It is an advance lesson in the school of Christ that gives us to understand that he that hateth his brother is a murderer, and hence that those who enlist as soldiers of the cross are not only to hate murder but are to hate the murder spirit and to cast it out entirely, so that they would have nothing but love in their hearts for any, even their enemies. Only the more advanced and better drilled of the soldiers of the Lord see clearly and distinctly the meaning of the Apostle's words when he denominates anger, malice, hatred, strife, envyings and evil speakings to be all works of the flesh and of the devil.

As soon as this is perceived, the true soldier starts a campaign against these well-intrenched evils and weaknesses of his own fallen flesh, and he needs to keep continually before his mind the thought that perfect love must rule in the hearts of all who in the end will be esteemed of the Lord overcomers, worthy of a share with him in the kingdom. He must see that perfect love worketh *no* ill to his neighbor (Rom. 13:10); he must see that evil speaking comes from evil thinking, because "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;" consequently he must see that there is an evil condition still intrenched which needs eradication, and only in the name and with the assistance of the Lord can he hope to conquer fully and completely all such evil heart conditions. True, the Lord reckoned us pure in heart from the moment we made full consecration to him, and his mercy covers all the blemishes that were in us, ignorantly and unwillingly, and thus he receives us into his school, into his army—but receiving us meant our education, our instruction, our drill. As the instruction progresses, the obedience must also have made progress, else we will not have been considered in the Lord's sight as pure in heart, pure in intention. Evidently it is the divine purpose that all in this school of the Lord shall ultimately come to the place where their hearts will approve nothing but that which is approved of the Lord—noble, pure, good—however perfectly or imperfectly they may be able to express all this in their mortal flesh.

If once the soldiers of the cross could get the proper thought that slander and evil speaking are assassinations of the character of another, and that defamation is the robbery of another's good name, the sooner they will see this matter in its truly awful light as it must appear in the Lord's sight, and once seeing the matter from this true, divine standpoint must awaken the new creature to the greatest activity possible in the overcoming of such works of the flesh and of the devil. Each will seek to purge out the old leaven of malice and envy and strife and crookedness and evil speaking, that he may be pure in heart, a copy of the Lord.

The Scriptural declaration is "Speak evil of no man," and all who can see the matter in its true light as above set forth will feel a zeal for God and for righteousness that will burn against all such iniquity wherever it may be found, especially in his own flesh.

But if it be reprehensible to speak evil of any person, if that be contrary to the spirit of love, the spirit of the Lord, how much more evil in the Lord's sight must it be if any of the Lord's brethren should speak evil of one another—speak evil of a member of the Lord's body! How terrible is the thought, how surely an evil-doer would lose the Captain's favor and ultimately be cut off from all relationship with him and with the body. The Lord refers to such, saying, "Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son [all of the house of sons, brethren of Christ, are figuratively represented as being the children of the Sarah covenant, the Abrahamic covenant.] These things thou hast done, and I kept silence; Thou thoughtest I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee."—Psa. 50:19-22.

Many have the thought that the evil speaking which the Scriptures forbid refers to false witness; but not so. The Lord certainly does not expect any of his people to have any sympathy with lies. If we might speak of sin in a cumulative way, we might say that to speak evil is a sin, and that if the matter were untrue it would be doubly sinful in the Lord's sight. The principle which underlies the matter should be clearly discerned by all of the Lord's people. It is this: The law of the new creation is love, and whoever loves another

would not only not lie to his injury, but would not even speak to his injury if the thing were the truth. Whoever, therefore, finds in his heart, in his own disposition, a love to tell about others something that is to their detriment, to their discredit or injury, should see that he is proportionately deficient in the spirit of love, in the spirit of the Lord. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, justly or unjustly; it is ready to believe all that is good, anxious to disbelieve and would avoid mentioning anything that is discreditable. Only duty would move it to speak at all of that which is to the discredit of another, and then it would be spoken only in such a manner as the Scriptures and the spirit of love would approve to those who ought to know, and with a view to the assistance of the wrong-doer.

Let us then as new creatures be encouraged with every better understanding of the Captain's word and will respecting us, full of confidence in his wisdom and in his grace—that he is willing and able to bring us off conquerors in the full sense if we are obedient to him. Let us strive that we may be able to say with the Apostle at the close of our experiences, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at that day." —2 Tim. 4:7, 8.

"I HAVE CHOSEN HIM"

1 CHRON. 28:1-10.—NOV. 29.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"Trust in the Lord with all thy heart."*—Prov. 3:5.

We have already noted the fact that in King David's seventieth year, when it was evident that he was nearing the close of life, one of his elder sons, Adonijah, following the example of Absalom, attempted to seize the kingdom, evidently surmising or perhaps knowing that his father had already determined that Solomon, his younger brother, should be the successor to the throne. We saw how, under the Lord's guidance, Adonijah's plans were frustrated and Solomon was duly anointed and proclaimed King of all Israel before the conspiracy had hatched. Solomon at this time was about twenty years old, a very young man to succeed to the throne, but evidently the best qualified of all. Of his elder brothers Farrar says, "They were men of fierce passions and haughty temperament, and would be singularly unfitted to carry out the peaceful and religious designs which David wished to bequeath to his successor." King David had evidently been an over-indulgent parent, and, occupied with the larger affairs of the kingdom, he probably had neglected the training of his children in the ways of the Lord. Solomon, born after his legal marriage to Bathsheba, and at a time when the King's misguided course had brought him to a very humble position before God and man, and educated at a time when Absalom's rebellion had perhaps taught the King a great lesson, we may reasonably suppose that the education of Solomon and his younger brothers was along different lines from those previously pursued with their elder brethren. In line with this thought we find that Solomon's education was under the care of the Prophet Nathan and in every way characteristic of him.

Not content with his own appreciation of Solomon as the most suitable heir to the throne and the one approved by the Lord, the King gathered a great assembly of the chief men of the nation to, so to speak, ratify Solomon's appointment and anointing. These princes represented (1) the heads of the families, in the twelve tribes; (2) the captains of industry and their subordinate officers; (3) in a word he gathered all the influential representatives of the nation, civil, military, and commercial. This was evidently a wise course, and points a lesson to the Lord's people of the church of this Gospel age. It is not sufficient that those who serve the Lord's flock shall be sure that they understand the divine will in respect to the general interests of his work; it is expedient that they seek the coöperation of the entire congregation either directly or through their chosen representatives. David's assurance that God had chosen Solomon was a guarantee to him that the Lord would so overrule and influence the nation that they would gladly accept the divine choice. At the same time, the course would have been the wisest one in any event, because it is an element of human nature to prefer to be considered rather than to be ignored.

Notwithstanding the King's age and decreptitude, and the fact that it was usual to sit in such assemblages, he stood upon his feet as implying the importance of the matters to be dealt with. His salutation to the officers and representatives of the realm was a gracious one: "Hear me, my brethren, and my people!" King David was not evidently of the dictator class, and all noble men and women will appreciate him all the more because of this. Notwithstanding his greatness, his success as a soldier in establishing and enlarging the kingdom, and his eminence as a poet, and his evident favor with God, he was not by any or all of these things made haughty, domineering, tyrannical, but even in speech was a faithful, humble shepherd to the people over whom God appointed him. No wonder his name is reverenced to this day not only by the Jews, his countrymen, but by all who love the Lord and the principles of righteousness.

With full candor the King related to his princes his own desires for the glory of God and the nation in connection with the building of the Temple, and with equal candor he explained why the Lord rejected the work at his hands—because he had been a man of war and had shed blood. Herein we see a wide distinction betwen the character of our God and his Temple and that of other gods and their temples. The gods of the heathen are gods of war and their mighty ones are their bloody ones. One is impressed with the same thought in connection with some of the homage given to war heroes in the nominal Christian church. For instance, in Westminster Abbey the names of generals and admirals and men of the world in general are almost the only ones made prominent. Nor was this an exceptional matter in David's case: we see the same principle pointed out in the Law. (Num. 31:19) Those who participated in battle were unclean and required purification for seven days before participating in the privileges of citizenship.

David called attention to the fact that the Lord had chosen him to be their King; that he had decreed that he should be their King forever—that is, that the kingship should be in the line of his posterity. He called their attention to the fact that the tribe of Judah was the tribe of royalty by divine appointment, and that in the tribe of Judah the house of Jesse had been chosen by divine direction through the Prophet Samuel, and that in the family of Jesse, above all of his sons, the Lord had chosen David to be King over all Israel. In this speech the King was not attempting to defend his position on the throne, for that was conceded by all the tribes; but he did wish that the people should recognize the matter in a still higher light—that it was God who was their real King, and that God had taken the supervision of the affairs of the nation and had ordered and directed matters up to that juncture. It is well that spiritual Israelites should refresh their memories similarly; that they should call to mind that God, who was the King of typical Israel, is specially the King of spiritual Israel, and that being our King the affairs of his church are not left to chance or haphazard, but are, in their largest interests at least under divine supervision and care. The Apostle points this out in respect to our Lord, the great High Priest, saying, "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God." So our Lord Jesus called not himself to a position of headship in the church, but was evidently appointed to that position by the Father, as the Apostle declares, "God hath given him to be the head over the church, which is his body."—Eph. 1:22, 23.

Likewise throughout the Gospel age we may be sure that the affairs of God's church have not been overlooked by him—that at all times during this age he has had the care of the interests of his people, and has raised up for them such helps and teachers as he saw best. Similarly, we may know that he still has the supervision of Zion's interests, as the Apostle declares, "God hath set in the body the various members as it hath pleased him." (1 Cor. 12:18) If this thought were more in the minds of the Lord's faithful they would be more on the lookout to note the will of the Lord in respect to the affairs of the church—whom he sets and where. With this thought in mind the choice of elders would not be conducted along lines of earthly preference or family kinship or selfish ambition, but instead the Lord's preference, the Lord's choice, would be sought. And, so far as the Lord's mind would be discerned, none other than his choice would be recognized by any of his faithful ones.

David had no doubt whatever respecting the Lord's choice for his successor. How he knew the mind of the Lord on the subject we are not informed, but evidently he had assured Bathsheba years before that her son Solomon should fill the throne, and now he probably announced the matter, declaring that God had given him assurance that Solomon should build the great temple which King David had not been permitted to build, but for which he had accumulated great stores of gold, silver, iron, marble, precious wood, etc. The word of the Lord, "I have chosen him to be my son and will be his Father," we are not to understand as meaning that Solomon was lifted up from the house of servants, of which Moses was the head, and made a member of the house of sons, of which Christ is the head—"Whose house are if we hold fast the confidence of our

rejoicing firm unto the end." According to the Scriptural record, the first opportunity for any members of the house of servants to become sons of God was granted at the time of our Lord's first advent, and in view of the fact that he had already made consecration of his life as man's redemption price. (John 1:12, 13) Solomon was God's son in a typical sense—he typified God's great Son, the Christ.

That Solomon was a model young man at the time of his induction into the kingdom, is evidenced from the statement of verse 7: "If he be constant to do my commands and my judgments as *at this day*, I will establish his kingdom forever." Here again, however, we see how the Lord, while making certain definite promises sure to be fulfilled, attaches them to certain individuals only upon conditions of their loyalty to him. As a matter of fact we know that Solomon did not continue in divine favor, but was led astray by the dangers of his lofty position and forfeited for his posterity their share in the Levitic promise. Hence it is that our Lord is not of Solomon's line, but a descendant of another son of David, Nathan.—See MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. V.—pp. 145-150.

Having thus set forth the reasons guiding him to the anointing of Solomon as his successor in the kingdom, the King charges responsibility upon the chief men of the nation—that they should maintain their relationship to the Lord and his arrangements faithfully; that they should not only observe the commandments of the Lord as already understood by them, but that they should continually seek to know the divine will in all things. He points out that as a nation this would be necessary to them if they would continue to possess the goodly land of Palestine. We know that they did not continue faithful to King David's exhortation, and that as a result the goodly land was lost, first by ten of the twelve tribes going into captivity, and subsequently by the two tribes being transported to a foreign land as prisoners. Nevertheless, God's promise to David still stands sure, and, like the promise made to Abraham, can have its fulfillment only when the greater than Isaac, greater than David, greater than Solomon, the antitype of these, shall take the throne and inaugurate the Millennial reign.

Turning to Solomon his newly appointed successor, the King exhorted his son, "Know thou the God of thy father and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind." Here knowledge is given its proper place. First, it is only in proportion as we come to know God that we can properly trust him or faithfully serve him, and the Christian's course should be a progressive one in these respects. To the first knowledge of God and the first faith on that small knowledge and first obedience following, come in God's order increased knowledge, increased faith and increased obedience. We are to remember, however, that the range of knowledge and faith is limited to natural things until the full consecration of heart is made and the begetting of the holy Spirit received, because "the natural man receiveth not the things of God neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." God hath revealed them unto us [begotten of the Spirit] by his Spirit which searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.

Solomon is exhorted to remember that God not only knows the outward things which man can see and of which they can imperfectly judge, but that he knows also the heart, the intent, the thoughts. The antitypical children of God need continually to have this in mind, for we walk by faith and not by sight. To us, too, the exhortation applies that we are to keep continually seeking the Lord if we would be continually finding him more and more precious, and that if we forsake him and break our covenant with him he will cast us off for ever.

The last verse of the lesson refers to the typical Temple which Solmon did build as God's sanctuary. He was strengthened in wisdom and in power and did accomplish that work. The antitype of Solomon, the Christ, has been strengthened, has been faithful, has been an overcomer, has been approved of the Father. He already has nearly prepared all the living stones which will constitute the living Temple of God for the coming age, through which the divine blessing will be administered for the restoration of the groaning creation. The building of the house, the growing together of the living stones, is already in progress; soon the capstone will be brought on with shoutings of grace, grace, unto it!

WHAT A TRIUMPH OF HIS GRACE IT WILL BE

What a triumph of his grace it will be
When the King shall take me home, even me;
Lifting me from low estate,
Passing by the wise and great,
What a triumph of his grace it will be!

What a triumph of his grace it will be
When at last he saves, through faith, even me;
Faith that he, the work begun,
Will watch o'er me 'til 'tis done,
What a triumph of his grace it will be!

What a triumph of his grace it will be
When, my sad mistakes all ended, I am free;
Free at last to do the right,
All my weakness turned to light,
What a triumph of his grace it will be!

What a triumph of his grace it will be
When he says, "Well done!" at last to even me;
When in glory he shall own me,
And with my Lord enthrone me,
What a triumph of his grace it will be! C. J. W

"THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM"

1 KINGS 3:14, 15.—DEC. 6.

Solomon began to reign when he was twenty years of age, and under unfavorable conditions in several respects. His elder brothers were ambitious for the throne, and the chief General of King David's army, Joab, had been deflected from the course of fidelity to the King. So had Abiathar, one of the chief priests, so that the young King had not a path of roses before him. The loyalty of his heart to the Lord and to the duties imposed upon him by his divine appointment to the kingship are remarkable for one so young. They clearly indicate the good training he enjoyed, and his father's wisdom in putting him under the tuition of the Prophet Nathan. Amongst the earliest acts of Solomon's reign was the calling of a religious convention, to which was assembled the chief men of the nation at Gibeon. Solomon realized the importance of religion to himself and to the people—that God must be first; and this assemblage was doubtless intended to stir up the religious enthusiasm of the nation, as well as to convince all that Solomon acknowledged the Lord, and that the course of the new kingdom would be after the same pattern as that of his father—loyalty to the Lord as the great King, and recognition of himself as merely his servant and representative.

It is generally understood that the thousand burnt offerings sacrificed on this occasion were burnt offerings only in the sense that they were offered in connection with a religious ceremony in acknowledgment of God, that certain of the inward parts were burned upon the altar, and that the shoulder of each was devoted to the priesthood. It is generally understood that the multitudes feasted upon the remainder of the flesh of these sacrificed animals. This custom was not only recognized in Israel but in various heathen nations, each acknowledging its own gods. Thus Croesus, King of Lydia, "offered up three thousand of every kind of sacrificial beasts," to the god of the Delphian oracle, as Herodotus relates. Xerxes, according to the same authority, "made an offering of a thousand oxen to the Trojan Minerva." Whether the heathen nations copied these sacrifices from the Jews or not cannot be positively stated, but the earliest and most authentic histories seem to so indicate.

It was while Solmon's mind was active in religious matters at Gibeon that the Lord appeared to him in a dream and asked him to choose what he would of any gift. We are not from this to infer that all dreams are of the Lord, but simply to understand that God is able to use dreams when he so chooses to convey lessons and instructions to his people. Many illustrations of this might be cited—for instance, Joseph's dream, Nebuchadnezzar's, Daniel's, Paul's, Peter's. We have the best of inspired assurance that these were really messages from the Lord, and hence are justified in attaching importance to them, believing in their fulfillment, etc. It is well to remember, however, that many dreams are simply operations of nature; that by reason of indigestion, or some other abnormal condition, one department of the brain seems to be awake while other departments are benumbed with sleep. Such dreams are apt to be inconsistent and unreasonable, because the judgment and counterpoise of reason from various standpoints and various ideas are lacking. Such dreams are inconsistent and meaningless. Another kind of dream or vision should be mentioned, namely, those which are quite evidently inspired by evil spirits and which not infrequently represent the Lord as speaking to

the individual, directing, commanding, etc.; these are in line with trance-medium development of spiritualism. The authorship of dreams being so much in doubt, as well as the fact that with the death of the apostles plenary inspiration ceased and the inspired class canonized, should make us very dubious, very skeptical, in respect to dreams that might come to any of us. Hence every dream and the lesson which it would seem to inculcate should be considered quite subordinate to the written Word of God. If they speak not in harmony with this Word, it is because there is no light in them. Those who are misled by dreams ascribe to them authority of a special revelation, and in so doing are not wise, but are greatly in danger of being sidetracked by our wily adversary.

Solomon was living in a time before the Scriptures were completed, at a time when it could not be said that the Scriptures are able to make wise, sufficient that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished. (2 Tim. 3:17) Besides, the declaration is that his dream or vision was from the Lord. Even then we see that the Lord was not operating contrary to the freedom of Solomon's will, because had the young King's mind been full of ambition for power, for victories over his enemies or for great riches, undoubtedly in the dream he would have responded by asking the things uppermost in his heart. His reply shows us that he was full of appreciation of the great work which God had committed to his care, that he recognized that his father's success had been of the Lord and not of his own power, and that whatever others thought of his father's real sentiments, Solomon recognized his loyalty to God, to truth, to righteousness, to uprightness of heart. In acknowledging the Lord's kindness in raising him to the throne he was acknowledging that God was the real King, that he merely sat upon "the throne of the kingdom of the Lord." This is further evidenced by the words, "God, thou hast made thy servant King instead of David my father." What a strength it gave this young man to realize that he was in God's hands; that it was not merely to his father's foresight and wisdom that he came to the throne, nor by the superior prestige of his father's influence over the army and the majority of the people, but of the Lord's providences.

Similarly, this should give strength to all of the Lord's consecrated people who realize that they have come into the present grace and truth not by their own wisdom nor by the wisdom of others, but through the wisdom and grace of the Lord. The same thought should be entertained by all who serve the church of God as ministers, servants in any department, in any manner responsible to the Lord for their position in the household of faith, and their opportunities to serve as the Lord's mouthpieces should be felt and confessed. But failure to confess it even implies a failure rightly to appreciate it.

The humility of the King is beautifully indicated by his declaration, "I am but a little child and know not how to order my course in life, my outgoings and incomings," and yet he was in the midst of the Lord's people, the center or head of the nation—though he felt himself incapable of the proper management of these high and responsible duties. He did not say "my people," but "thy people which thou hast chosen." We feel like suggesting a lesson here to some of the elders of the Lord's flock, who, after the manner of the Babylonians, are inclined to speak of the congregations to whom they minister, as "my people," "my flock," "my church." They probably do not realize how inappropriate are such expressions; that if natural Israel was the Lord's people, whom he had chosen, how much more the antitypical Israel should be thought of and spoken of as the Lord's people, the Lord's flock. The very fact that any one would speak of the congregation of the Lord's people as his own indicates a dangerous condition of mind and a tendency to be heady, high-minded, injurious, detrimental to the interests of spiritual Zion. Those who have had such a tendency of mind should correct themselves with fasting and prayer, peradventure their wrongdoing may be forgiven of the Lord and they may be kept from stumbling into further self-assurance. And the Lord's flock everywhere should be quick to resent any such human ownership or control. A failure to quickly discern and properly resent such self-assurance on the part of leaders is an indication that the flocks to whom they minister are not fully appreciating and enjoying the liberty with which Christ is pleased to make free all who are truly his sheep and who acknowledge him as their chief Shepherd.

In speaking of the numbers of Israel, Solomon used a form of expression common in his day for a large multitude—namely, a great people that cannot be numbered or counted for multitude. It is estimated that the numbers at this time were about 6,000,000, and probably without the conveniences at hand for taking an enumeration it was actually impossible to determine the number of people—the facilities for keeping track of births and deaths being much less convenient and much less accurate than at the present time.

With this preamble as showing his estimate of his own incapacity and of the greatness of the work, and that the people were the Lord's people, and that he himself was the Lord's appointment to be the King, Solomon now comes to the expression of his choice, namely, "an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between the good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great people?" Solomon recognized that the most necessary thing for the welfare of the nation was righteous judgment of the various questions pertaining to the nation's welfare as well as those affecting individual matters. Doubtless he had come to realize, as his subsequent written proverbs clearly indicate, that selfishness is a foe to justice, and that the very wisest and best of governments need to be carefully guarded lest the selfish interests of some should work injury to others—to many. The whole world realizes this today, and if we would ask civilized humanity in general what is the one great need of the world, the answer unquestionably would be, We need to have righteousness established between nations, between individuals, and we need wisdom to discern the right from the wrong, the false from the true, the pure from the evil. Many of the wisest people of the world, although realizing the needs of the present time, have reached the conclusion that it is useless to attempt to secure even-handed justice in all particulars, amongst all classes; and those who are best informed respecting the teachings of the divine Word have been led to pray with greater earnestness than ever before, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." They realize that earthly beings are all more or less fallen, more or less selfish, and that a crying need of the world today is for a perfect government, backed up by full power to enact, and to execute as well, laws of righteousness which shall control the whole world, subduing evil, exalting good. The antitype of Solomon, the Prince of Peace, Messiah, is to accomplish this in the world in the Father's good time, in the Millennial age.

The Lord was pleased with Solomon's choice; he could not have chosen better. Some have suggested that he might have chosen spiritual things, and thus have made a still wiser, better choice; but such forget that the spiritual things were not open to be understood or to be chosen or to be acquired in Solomon's day, nor until the great atonement for sin had been made—until the call went forth inviting believers who had fled from sin and who had laid hold on the hopes set before them in Christ to become self-sacrificers with him, joint-participators with him in the holy Spirit of adoption and ultimately to be joint-heirs with him in the kingdom. Solomon, therefore, chose as wisely as was possible for him to choose of the things that were known to him and attainable in his day.

It was just like our heavenly Father to give Solomon the riches and honors which he had not asked as a reward of his appreciation of wisdom. Indeed it is Solomon himself who expresses the thought that riches and honors are in the right hand of wisdom as her reward. It is thus implied that the Lord in giving to anyone wisdom, grants also the rewards which wisdom brings—namely, riches and honor. Some one then may inquire, How comes it that those who now seek the wisdom from above, the highest of all wisdom, first pure, then peaceable, easy to be entreated and full of mercy and good fruits—how is it that such very rarely get earthly riches and honors? We reply, that in Solomon's time the Lord was dealing with natural fleshly Israel, and his promises were along natural fleshly lines, but that during this Gospel dispensation he is dealing with spiritual Israel and his promises and blessings are along spiritual lines. The wisdom that his people are to seek and to enjoy, the wisdom that cometh from above, is not the wisdom of this world, as the Apostle clearly points out that the riches and honors which are in the hands of this heavenly wisdom, which comes to the Lord's consecrated church, are spiritual riches and spiritual honors which the world sees not and appreciates not in this present time—which, like the wisdom itself, can be appreciated only by those whose eyes of understanding have been opened and who can and do thus discern the riches of God's grace toward his elect church, which "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of [the] natural man, but which God hath revealed unto us by his spirit."—1 Cor. 2:9, 10.

The riches and honors which came to Solomon incidentally with his wisdom are world-renowned, and the blessing of long life which was made conditional was partly fulfilled. Solomon lived to be sixty, whereas, we believe, under this promise he would have lived until eighty had he been more obedient to the divine will, but with him as with many others, prosperity was much more difficult to stand than adversity.

When Solomon awoke and realized that these things had been a dream, a visitation of the Lord, he returned to Jerusalem, the capital city where the ark was located, and presented himself as a sacrificer, offering burnt offerings and peace offerings and making a feast for his servants, and realizing that the Lord

was prospering him in the matter to which he had called him, he evidently was full of joy and satisfaction and peace. So it should be with all the Lord's people who have been called to be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, for "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept through faith and by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." They, too, should realize that the proper way to show their appreciation of the Lord's promised blessings is by a manifestation of faith in him, confidently trusting and rejoicing in these. Wherever we find fear, trepidation, unrest, we may know that these are symptoms of some spiritual malady; because whatever may be the outward disturbances, troubles, vexations, it is the privilege of those who are the Lord's to have the peace of God which passeth all understanding continually ruling in their hearts. It is their privilege to realize fully, thoroughly that all things are working together for good to them because they love the Lord, and with this thought of their call to the kingdom and of the Lord's willingness that they should serve therein, and with the assurance that he will give grace and glory and no good thing withhold from those who walk uprightly, we certainly have reason for thankfulness and heart-rejoicing before him.

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"HALLELUJAH! WHAT A SAVIOR!"

CHRIST, THE INSTRUCTOR, JUSTIFIER, SANCTIFIER AND DELIVERER OF HIS PEOPLE.

"Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, [justification], and sanctification, and redemption [deliverance]." —1 Cor. 1:30.

CHRIST OUR WISDOM

Since God's dealings with his creatures recognize their wills, the first step in his dealings with them, therefore, is to give them knowledge, or "wisdom," as it is translated in the above Scripture. It is for this reason that preaching was the first command of the Gospel age. To the worldly-minded the preaching of forgiveness on account of faith in the crucified Jesus did not seem the wise course. To them it would have seemed better for God to have commanded something to be *done by them.* But, as Paul says—"It pleased God to save those who believe by [knowledge imparted through what the worldly consider] the foolishness of this preaching."—1 Cor. 1:21.

The first gift of God to our redeemed race, therefore was knowledge.

(1) Knowledge of the greatness and absolute justice of the God with whom we have to do. This knowledge was prepared for by the Mosiac Law, which was a "schoolmaster," or pedagogue, to lead men to Christ. And Christ, by his obedience to that law, *magnified* the law and showed its honorableness, its worthiness; and thus honored God, the author of that law, and showed his character.

(2) Knowledge of his own weakness, of his fallen, sinful and helpless condition, was also needful to man, that he might appreciate his need of a Savior such as God's plan had provided for him.

(3) Knowledge of how the entire race of Adam fell from divine favor and from mental, moral and physical perfection, through him, was also necessary. Without this knowledge we could not have seen how God could be *just* in accepting the one life, of Christ, as the ransom price for the life of the whole world.

(4) Without knowledge as to what is the penalty for sin —that "the wages of sin is *death*"—we never should have been able to understand how the *death* of our Redeemer paid the penalty against Adam and all in him.

(5) Knowledge, in these various respects, was, therefore, absolutely necessary to us, as without it we could have had no proper faith, and could not have availed ourselves of God's provision of justification, sanctification and deliverance through Christ.

Most heartily, therefore, we thank God for knowledge or wisdom concerning his plan. And we see that this wisdom came to us through Christ; because, had it not been for the plan of salvation of which he and his cross are the center, it would have been useless to give the knowledge, useless to preach, because there would have been no salvation to offer.

CHRIST OUR JUSTIFICATION

That Christ is made unto righteousness or justification implies,—

(1) That we are unjust, or unrighteous in the sight of God, and unworthy of his favor.

(2) That, in view of our unworthiness, God had in some manner arranged that Christ's righteousness should stand good for "us," and thus give "us" a standing before God which we could not otherwise have because of our imperfections—our unrighteousness.

(3) This scripture does not imply that Christ's righteousness covers every sinner, so that God now views every sinner as though he were righteous, and treats all as his children. No, it refers merely to a special class of sinners—sinners who, having come to a knowledge of sin and righteousness, and having learned the undesirableness of sin, have repented of sin, and sought to flee from it and to come into harmony with God. This is the particular class referred to in this scripture—"who of God is made unto *us* justification," or righteousness.

(4) How God has arranged or caused Christ to be *our* "righteousness," or justification, is not here explained; but what we know of divine law and character assures us that the principle of *Justice*, the very foundation of divine government, must somehow have been fully satisfied in all of its claims. And other scriptures fully substantiate this conclusion. They assert that God so arranged as to have the price of man's sin paid for him; and that the price paid was an exact equivalent, a *ransom* or *corresponding price*, offsetting in every particular the original sin and just penalty, death, as it came upon the original sinner and through him by heredity upon all men. (Rom. 5:12, 18-20) He tells us that this plan of salvation was adopted *because* by it "God might be [or continue] just, and [yet be] the justifier of him [any sinner] that believeth in Jesus"—that comes unto God under the terms of the New Covenant, of which Christ Jesus is the mediator, having sealed it, or made it a covenant, by his own precious blood.—Heb. 13: 21; 10:29.

(5) While the benefits of this gracious arrangement are only *for "us,"* for "believers," for those who come unto God by Christ—under the provisions of the *New Covenant—these benefits are, nevertheless, made applicable *to all;* for God's special provision for the whole world of sinners is that *all* shall "come to a *knowledge of the truth,*" that they *may*, if then they will accept the conditions of God's covenant, be everlastingly saved. A knowledge and a rejection of error—of false doctrines which misrepresent the divine character even though they be mixed with a little misconstrued truth—will not constitute grounds for condemnation; but a knowledge of *the truth* and a rejection of it will bring condemnation to the second death. The Greek text states this much more emphatically than our common English translation. It says, "come to an *accurate* knowledge of the truth."—1 Tim. 2:4.

(6) The provision made was sufficient for *all men.* Our Lord gave himself [in death] a *ransom*—a corresponding price —*for all;* he was a "propitiation [or sufficient satisfaction] for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2) As a consequence, he is both able and willing "to save unto the uttermost [*i. e.*, to save from sin, and from divine disfavor, and from death, and all these *everlastingly*] *all that come* unto God by him." (Heb. 7:25) And inasmuch as God's provision is so broad, that *all* shall come to an *exact knowledge of the truth* respecting these provisions of divine mercy under the terms of the New Covenant;—inasmuch as the provision is that *all* the sin and prejudice-blinded eyes shall be opened, and that the devil, who for long centuries has deceived men with his misrepresentations of the truth, is to be bound for a thousand years, so that he can deceive the nations no more; and that then a highway of holiness shall be cast up in which the most stupid cannot err or be *deceived;* and in view of all this provision God declares that *all* men will be saved from the guilt and penalty incurred through Adam's sentence. *Because,* when all of these blessed arrangements have been carried into effect, there will be *no reason* for a solitary member of the human family remaining a stranger and alien from God's family except by *his own choice* or preference for unrighteousness, and that with an accurate knowledge that all unrighteousness is sin. Such as, of their own preference, knowingly choose sin, when the way and means of becoming servants of God are clearly understood by them, are wilful sinners on their own account, and will receive the second death sentence as the wages of their own opposition to God's righteous arrangements.

* See June 15, 1919, issue, for critical examination of Covenants.

The world's salvation will be complete the moment all have come to an *accurate knowledge* of the truth concerning God's great plan of salvation; because then they will know that by accepting Christ and the New Covenant which God offers to all through Christ, they may have *life everlasting*—salvation to the uttermost. Whether they will hear (heed) or whether they will forbear (refuse to heed) will not alter the fact that *all* will thus have been saved from Adamic sin and death—will have had a full salvation tendered to them. Thus, the living God will be the Savior of *all men*—especially or everlastingly, however, the Savior of only those who accept his grace and become "his people" under the New Covenant.—1 Tim. 4:10.

(7) It is only to "us" that Christ is made *justification* or righteousness. Though all men are to be *saved* in the sense of being brought to the knowledge and opportunity of salvation, none have Christ as their *justification*, the covering of their imperfections, imputing his righteousness to them, except "us"—the household of faith. "Unto you, thereore, *which believe* he is precious." (1 Pet. 2:7) He of God is made unto *us* justification, righteousness, covering and cleansing from the unintentional weaknesses and shortcomings of the present, as well as from the original sin and its sentence. Who is he who condemns us? Will that Anointed One who died; and still more has been raised, who also is at the right hand of God, and who intercedes on our behalf? Nay, he has been made our justification; it is the merit of his great sacrifice that speaks our justification.—Rom. 8:34.

Justification signifies to make right, or whole, or just. And from the word "whole" comes the word "(w) holiness," signifying soundness, or perfection, or righteousness. None of the fallen race are either actually or reckonedly whole, sound, perfect or just by nature. "There is none righteous [just, sound, holy], no, not one; all have sinned." But all who come unto God by Christ, whom he has accepted as the justification or righteousness of all who accept the New Covenant, are from that moment accepted and treated as sound, perfect, holy. Although we are actually unholy or imperfect, we are made "partakers of God's holiness;" first, reckonedly, in Christ, and, second, more and more actually by the eradication of our sinful tendencies and the development of the fruits and graces of the Spirit, through chastisements, experience, etc. (Heb. 12:10) God not only begins on the basis of holiness, imputing to us Christ's merit to cover our demerits, but he continues on the same line, and ever urges us to "be holy [to strive after actual soundness and perfection], even as he is holy." (1 Pet. 1:15, 16) And he promises the faithful strivers that they shall ultimately attain absolute holiness, soundness, perfection—in the resurrection, when they shall be made actually like Christ, as now their wills are copies of his. For "without holiness [thus attained] no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. 12:14) Hence, "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [Christ] is pure"—seeking to be as much like him as possible now, and by and by to be fully in his image.—1 John 3 3. 2.

Justified persons and no others are *Christians*, in the proper use of that term.

CHRIST OUR SANCTIFICATION

The term "Sanctification," used in this text, means *set apart, consecrated, devoted to, or marked out for a holy use or purpose*

Christ by God is made unto *us* sanctification. That is to say, God through Christ sets apart or marks out for a special share in his great plan "us"—the church.

Many make the serious error of supposing that God is sanctifying the world,—sanctifying sinners. As a consequence of this error, many are seeking to copy Christ's example, and thus be sanctified before God, while they repudiate the doctrine of the *ransom*, or justification by faith. They confound sanctification and justification in their minds and suppose that if they consecrate or sanctify or set apart their lives to God's service and to deeds of kindness they are *thereby* justified.

This is a serious error. Justification is entirely separate and distinct from sanctification; and no one can be sanctified in God's sight, and in the Scriptural sense, unless he has *first* been justified or cleansed from all sin.

Consecrating a person or thing to God's service does not *cleanse* that person or thing. On the contrary, God always refuses to *accept* anything imperfect or unclean. This is distinctly and repeatedly shown in the typical arrangements of the law given to typical Israel. The priests were obliged to wash themselves and put on new, clean linen garments *before consecration* to their office and work as God's typically set apart, or sanctified, priesthood. Their cleansing and new clothing represented *justification*, the appropriation of Christ's righteousness instead of the filthy rags of their own unrighteousness, as members of the fallen race.

The seal or mark of their *consecration* was a totally different one, and followed the cleansing ceremony, as consecration should in every case follow justification. The sign or mark of consecration or sanctification was the anointing with the holy oil, which symbolized the holy Spirit.

The anointing oil or symbol of consecration was poured upon the head of the high priest only, but the under-priests were represented in the members of his body, even as Christ is the head over the church which is his body, and all together constitute the royal priesthood. So the holy Spirit given without measure to our Lord and head applies to us (his body) through him. The Father gave the spirit to the Son only: *all* of the anointing oil was poured upon the head. At Pentecost it ran down from the head to the body, and has continued with the body ever since, and whoever comes into the "body" comes thereby under the consecrating influence—the spirit of holiness, the spirit of God, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of the truth.—Acts 2:4.

But in consecrating the typical priests the blood was not ignored. It was put upon all, upon the tip of the right ear, upon the thumb of the right hand and upon the great toe of the right foot, thus showing that the hearing of faith, the work of faith and the walk of faith must all be touched and made holy by an appreciation of the precious blood of atonement—the blood of Christ—the blood of the New Covenant. And then the garments of all the priests—their clean linen garments—were sprinkled with a mixture of the blood and the oil, implying that both justification through the blood and sanctification through the possession of the spirit of holiness are necessary in our consecration.

To what end or service are God's people, the Royal Priesthood, consecrated or set apart?

Some would be inclined to answer: To live without sin, to practice the graces of the spirit, to wear plain clothing and in general to live a rather gloomy life now, hoping for greater liberty and pleasure hereafter.

We reply, This is the common but mistaken view. True, God's people do seek to avoid sin; but that is not the *object* of their consecration. Before consecration, they learned the exceeding sinfulness and undesirableness of sin, and saw Christ Jesus as their sin-bearer and cleanser. Consequently, they had fled from sin *before* consecration. When consecrated they will still loathe and abhor sin, and that more and more as they grow in grace and in knowledge; but we repeat that to seek to live free from sin is not a proper definition of consecration or sanctification.

It is true also that all of the consecrated will seek to put on the graces of Christ's spirit and example; but neither is this the *object* of our call to consecration under the Gospel high-calling.

It is true, also, that our consecration may lead to plainness of dress, and bring upon us suffering for righteousness' sake, in this present evil world (age); but, we repeat, these are not the *objects* of our consecration. They are merely incidental results.

The object of God in calling out the Gospel church, and providing for the consecration or sanctification of its members, is a grand and worthy one; and when once clearly seen by the eye of faith it makes all the incidentals which it will cost, such as self-denials in dress, loss of friends and companionships, and even persecution for the truth's sake, etc., to be esteemed but light afflictions, not worthy to be compared to the glorious object of our consecration, which is that we may become "partakers of the divine nature" and "joint-heirs with Christ," and together with him bless the world during its day of judgment—the Millennium—as we will show

God in his wisdom and foreknowledge knew that sin would enter this world and bring its blight,—sorrow, pain and death. He foresaw that after their experience with sin, some of his creatures would be, not only willing, but anxious, to forsake sin and return to his fellowship and love and the blessing of life everlasting. It was in view of this foreknowledge that God formed his *plan* for human salvation.

In that plan Christ Jesus our Lord had first place, first honor. As he was the beginning of the creation of God, so he was the chief of all God's creatures thus far brought into being. But God purposed a *new* creation—the creation of a new order of beings different and higher than men, angels and archangels—higher than all others, and of his own divine essence or nature. The worthiness of any one accepted to that great honor should be recognized not only by God himself, but by all of his intelligent creatures. Hence, God, who knew well the character of his first-begotten Son (our Lord Jesus), decided to prove or test his well-beloved Son in a manner that would prove to all of his intelligent creatures, what they all now recognize in the *new* song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain

to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing."—Rev. 5:12.

But the exaltation of our Lord, who already was the chief of all creation, was even less remarkable than another feature of the divine plan, foreordained before the foundation of the world (1 Pet. 1:2; Eph. 1:4); namely, that he would make to some of his human creatures (of the race sentenced as unworthy of any future life, but *redemed* from that sentence by Christ's sacrifice) an *offer* of joint-heirship and companionship with his beloved Son, in the order of the *new* creation (of the divine nature), of which he has made the worthy Lamb the head and chief, *next* to himself.—1 Cor. 15:27.

This offer is not made to all of the redeemed race, but to *many*—"Many are called." The called are *only* those who in this age *are* justified by faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice. Unbelievers and scoffers are called to repentance and faith; but none are called to this high calling of participation in the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4) until they have forsaken sin and laid hold upon Christ as their Redeemer.

If the *worthiness* of the Lamb was necessary to be shown, the worthiness of those whom he redeemed to be his joint-heirs (called also the bride, the Lamb's wife) would also need to be shown, proved, manifested before angels as well as before men, that God's ways may be seen to be just and equitable.

It is for this reason that God calls upon those whom he *does* call, to *consecrate themselves to him*—not in dress or word merely, but in everything. It is not a consecration to preach merely, although all the consecrated will delight to use every opportunity in telling to others the good tidings of God's love. It is not a consecration to temperance reform, social reform, political reform, or any other work of reform, although we may and should feel a deep intrest in anything that would benefit the fallen race. But our devotion should be as that of a maid to her mistress, or of soldiers to their officers, or, better yet, as that of a dutiful child toward a beloved parent—swift to hear, quick to obey, not planning or seeking our own wills, but the will of our Father in heaven. Just such an attitude is implied in the words sanctified, or consecrated to God. It takes hold of the *will*, and therefore rules the entire being, except where uncontrollable weaknesses or insurmountable obstacles hinder. And since our call and acceptance are based upon the New Covenant, which accepts a perfect will on the part of those trusting in the precious blood, and does not demand perfection of deeds, it follows that all of us, no matter how degraded by the fall, may be acceptable to God in the beloved, and make their calling and election sure.

Nor is this arrangement of the New Covenant (by which those in Christ whose wills and efforts are right toward God are not held responsible for the full letter of God's law, but for the observance of its spirit or meaning, to the extent that they have knowledge, opportunity and ability) a violation of justice, as some have assumed. God's law was designed for perfect creatures, and not for fallen ones; but under the New Covenant in Christ, God has adapted his law to the condition of the fallen ones without interfering with that law itself or even with its spirit. The perfect law, dealing with the perfect man, demanded a full consecration of his will to the wisdom and will of his Creator, and an obedience to that Creator's Word to the extent of his ability. But since man was created "upright" (and not fallen), in the moral image and likeness of God (and not born in sin and shapen in iniquity), it follows that his perfect will ,operating through a perfect body and under favorable conditions, *could* have rendered *perfect* obedience; and hence nothing less could be acceptable to God.

How just, how reasonable and how favorable is God's arrangement for us! Yet he assures us that, while he has made all the arrangments favorable for us, he must insist on our wills being just right,—we must be pure in heart, and in this respect exact copies of his Beloved Son, our Lord. (Rom. 8:29 —*Diaglott*) Of those who learn of and accept God's grace in Christ, in the forgiveness of sins under the New Covenant, all of whom are called to this high calling of joint-heirship with Christ in the divine nature and its honors, only a few will make their calling and election sure (or complete), because the testings of their wills and faith are so exacting—so crucial.

Nor should either of these God-declared facts surprise us: it is not strange, but reasonable, that God should *test* severely, yea, with "fiery trials" (1 Pet. 4:12), the faith and love of those invited to so high a station. If they be not loyal and trustful to the last degree, they surely are "not fit for the kingdom," its responsibilities and its divine honors. Nor should it surprise us to be informed by God's Word that only a "few," a "little flock," will gain the prize to which many are called and for which many consecrate. Few are willing to "endure" a great fight of afflictions; partly while being made a gazing stock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly as companions of those who are so abused for Christ's sake and his truth's sake.—Heb. 10:32, 33.

In a word, the trial of the justified and consecrated consists in the presenting to them of *opportunities* to serve God and his cause in this present time, when, because of sin abounding, whosoever will live godly and hold up the light will suffer persecution. Those whose consecration is complete and of the proper kind will rejoice in their privilege of serving God and his cause, and will count it all joy to be accounted worthy to suffer in such a cause, and *thus* to attest to God the sincerity of their love and of their consecration to him. Such consecrated ones, pure in heart (in will or intention), realizing the object of present trials, glory in tribulations brought upon them by faithfulness to Christ and his Word, realizing that their experiences are similar to those of the Master, and that thus they have evidence that they are walking in the footsteps of him who said, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. Ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—1 John 3:13; John 15:18, 19; Rev. 2:10.

Furthermore, they glory in tribulations because they realize that the Lord will be near them while they endure faithfully, and that he will not permit them to be tempted above what they are able to bear, but will with every temptation provide some way of escape; because they realize the necessity of forming character, and that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope—a hope that maketh not ashamed; and because they realize that all these favorable results of tribulation follow, on account of a genuine consecration in which the love of God has been shed abroad in the heart, displacing the spirit of the world, the spirit of selfishness —1 Cor. 10:13; Rom. 5:3, 5.

"He that committeth sin [wilfully] is of the devil." "Whosoever is begotten of God .... cannot sin [wilfully]." (1 John 3:3-10; 5:18) And we have seen that all of those acceptable to God in Christ were obliged to come unto him under the New Covenant, whose first condition is faith in Christ; and whose second condition is an entire consecration of their *wills* to God's will and service. Hence, any *wilful* sin would mean that they had repudiated the New Covenant and were no longer recognized as begotten of the truth, but under the influence of sin, and hence begotten of the devil—his children.

If any justified and consecrated child of God commit sin it will be, at most, only *partially wilful*—largely of weakness or deception. He may feel his shame and weep bitterly, as did Peter; but all such penitence would but prove that his sin was not of the wilful kind that would mark him as "of the devil." No: so long as the seed of the truth, and of his consecration, remains in him, he cannot sin (wilfully). But if any trespass under deception or weakness, and not wilfully, he has an advocate with the Father,—"Jesus Christ the [absolutely] righteous" one, whose merit is applicable for all unwilful errors of such as abide under the shadow of the New Covenant. If he confess his sin, God is just to forgive him—because Christ died. (1 John 1:7, 9; 2:1) But if we should say that we have no sin, no imperfection, we deceive ourselves, make God a liar, and disown the Advocate whom God provided; for we are weak through the fall, and liable to deception and error at the hands of the world, the flesh, and the devil.—1 John 1:8, 10.

Having seen what sanctification is, its object or result and its present cost, we note that Christ by God is made unto us sanctification—in that we could have no such call and could experience no such work of grace, under the divine plan, except for Christ and the work he did for us;—justifying us before the law of God, sealing for us the New Covenant and making us fit for this call to "glory, honor and immortality."

CHRIST OUR REDEMPTION, OR DELIVERANCE

Many readers confound the words *redemption* and *redeem*, found in the New Testament, whereas they refer to different features of the work of Christ. The word *redeem* in its every use in the New Testament signifies to *acquire* by the payment of a price, while the word *redemption* in its every New Testament use signifies the deliverance or *setting free* of that which was acquired by the payment of a price. "We were redeemed [purchased] with the precious blood [the sacrificed life, the death] of Christ." We wait for "the redemption [the deliverance] of our body" (the church) from present imperfections and death. We wait for "the redemption [deliverance] of the *purchased* possession."—1 Pet. 1:18, 19; Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:14.

In Christ is our redemption, or deliverance; for so God has ordained. He who redeemed, or bought us with the sacrifice of his own life, gives us, as our Prophet or Teacher, *wisdom* by his Gospel, to see our fallen state and himself as our helper; as our Priest, he first *justifies* us and then *sanctifies* or conse-

crates us, as his under priesthood; and, finally, as King, he will *fully deliver* the faithful from the dominion of sin and death, to the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature;—for "God will raise up [from the dead] us also, *by Jesus.*" If faithful to our call and covenant, even unto death, we shall at the second coming of our Redeemer, receive "an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God [his Word and providence] through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."—Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:4, 5; Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 4:14.

"Hallelujah! What a Savior!"

Truly he is able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.—Heb. 7:25.

WHOM GOD DID PREDESTINATE

In the light of the foregoing, now read a hitherto obscure passage of Scripture: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *must be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover [the class] whom he did predestinate [must be copies of his Son], them he also called [or invited to that honor through the Gospel]; and whom he called, them he also [previously] justified [because he could not consistently call to honor and glory those who were under his own sentence of death as sinners]; and whom he justified them he also [previously] honored [by sending to them the Gospel message]."—Rom. 8: 28-30.

Thus the Apostle continues his argument concerning the favor of God toward the church, asserting that God had a purpose to fulfil, and that the *call* of the Church is in acccordance with that purpose. (Peter declares the same thing.—1 Pet. 1:2) And he asserts that all God's dealings and arrangements correspond with that purpose, and co-operate for its acomplishment. God's predestination was, (1) that he would have a class of beings of the divine nature; (2) that each one of that class must have a fixed character, like that of his ever-faithful, beloved Son. To get such a class, the Apostle reasons and declares, God must *call* or *invite* some (just as we see he is doing), because "no man taketh this honor to himself." (Heb. 5:4) But whom would God call or invite? None were worthy; all had gone out of the way; none were righteous, no not one. Hence it was necessary that God provide for the *justification* of those he would *call.* But he could justify only such as *believed* in Jesus; and how could they believe on him of whom they had not heard, and without a preacher sent of God? (Rom. 10: 14) Hence it was necessary that these be honored with the Gospel message in this age, in advance of its general revealing to every creature during the Millennial age.—Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 4:6; 1 Cor. 15:1.

True, many more were *called* than will be acceptable—many more than will acquire the likeness of the Beloved Son; and many were *justified* who did not, after believing, consecrate themselves, and whose justification consequently lapsed; and many were honored with a hearing of the Gospel who, after hearing a little of it, rejected the message of mercy and favor. But *all* the preaching, justifying and calling of this Gospel age has been to the intent that the foreknown class of the predestinated character might be selected and made joint-heirs with Christ.—See also 2 Tim. 1:8-10.

"What shall *we* [who have been so highly favored by God, and for whose successful running of the race every necessary arrangement and provision has been made] say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" And in view of this let each say,—"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows (fulfill my covenant of consecration) unto the Lord now, in the presence of all his people." (This will mean, as in our Lord's case, faithfulness dying daily, 1 Cor. 15:31—even unto death, but)—"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his holy ones."—Psa. 116:12-15.

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INCREASED PRICE OF DAWNS IV, V, VI

In consequence of raise of prices for printing and binding just after we had reduced our price on cloth-bound DAWNS, we have been selling all volumes of the series at a loss for the past six months. The loss has been specially heavy on the thicker volumes, and we now feel compelled to increase the price on these to 40 cents, plus 10 cents postage. Subscribers' wholesale rate 20 cents plus 10 cents postage. These prices take effect Nov. 1, 1903.

Volume VI, will have over 700 pages and is hoped for in December. Those who have already paid for it at old prices need not send additionally.

THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE

1 KINGS 8:1-11, 62, 63.—DECEMBER 13.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"*I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.*"—Psa. 122:1.

Very interesting is the story of the great Temple of God purposed and largely prepared for by King David and built by King Solomon the wise. It was commenced in the fifth year of Solomon's reign and finished in the twelfth. The story of its cost seems fabulous, the gold and silver employed in its construction being estimated at from $1,000,000,000 to $2,500,000,000. We are inclined to think the smaller estimate nearer to the truth, or that the ancient standard of values, a talent, possibly, experienced a change of values, as for instance, was the case in the English pound sterling, which originally meant a pound of silver in value but subsequently a quarter of a pound of silver, and today by reason of the change of standard from silver to gold, it has a still different meaning not at all connected with silver. Similarly the Jewish talent may have experienced changes of value in the long centuries of its use. However, regardless of the aggregated value of the gold, silver, brass, precious stones, constituting the Temple, we have every reason to conclude that it was a wonderful structure for its day—one of which King Solomon in all his glory and wisdom, and the people of Israel with him, had good reason to rejoice and not feel ashamed.

The context shows that King Hiram of Phoenicia not only contributed largely to the Temple as a friendly gift, but also supplied skilled workmen under Solomon's pay, who in various ways assisted in the preparation of the brazen columns for the porch, untensils for the court, etc., etc. Thirty thousand Israelites were drafted to serve in the Temple construction one month out of each quarter. Besides these there would appear to have been 150,000 laborers, apparently foreigners, hired from outside (1 Kings 5:13-16; 9:21, 22), or they may have been aliens residing in the land of Palestine—Canaanites. The overseers would appear to have been 550 chiefs and 3,300 subordinates, of whom 250 were Israelites, and 3,600 Canaanites. (2 Chron. 2:17; 8:10) This preponderance of the Canaanites amongst the overseers seems to imply that the laborers were Canaanites, and also reminds us that "the Canaanite was still in the land." The fact that the Canaanites, strangers from the Commonwealth of Israel, were the chief laborers in the construction of the great Temple, seems to have been typical of the fact that aliens, strangers, foreigners, and enemies of the Truth have the larger share in the work of preparing the antitypical Temple. Their hammering, their chiseling, their melting and casting, under divine providence, serve to make ready the living stones and the glorious pillars for the spiritual house. Verily they know not what they do. Their work is greater, better, than they comprehend, as the glories of eternity will demonstrate.

The lesson opens with the Temple's construction finished, and the chiefs of Israel gathered with King Solomon at Jerusalem for its dedication, at the time we call October, corresponding to the Jewish New Year feast, held in connection with the great Day of Atonement. The Atonement Day was probably past, the sacrifices of atonement having been made in the Tabernacle and the blessing of the Lord, as usual, dispensed upon the people for the new year. While they were thus legally cleansed, reconciled to God typically, was the most appropriate time for the dedication of the Temple, which represented the spiritual hopes and aims of the nation.

The Ark, representing typically the divine covenant with Abraham, the fulfilment of which centered in the Christ, must be transferred from the Tabernacle to the Temple, that thus

the latter might supersede the former as the meeting place between God and his covenant people. The thousands of sacrifices offered during the procession of the King and priests and the celebrities of the nation, besides evidencing their devotion to God and their willingness to sacrifice, had a typical significance as representing the consecration even unto death of the whole company thus engaged in transferring the emblem of their faith and hope. In some respects, therefore, the King and the chiefs of the nation represented typically our Lord Jesus and the overcomers, and the chief priests and under priests represented the same from another standpoint. The procession was the meeting place between the sacrificing emblems of the present age and the typical representation of the kingdom glories and honors of the next age. The Lord's people today seem to be following this type. The Great King, anti-typical Solomon, has about finished the Temple construction and has sent forth the invitation of the heads, the chiefs of spiritual Israel, to attend and share in the great dedication. These chiefs are not the great of this world, but the Lord's very elect. From the four quarters of the spiritual heavens they are gathering, the procession has already commenced; but as the Temple was not complete until the Ark, its most important part, was placed in position, so the glorious Temple will not really be finished until every member of the body of Christ has been changed from the Tabernacle condition to the Temple or permanent condition in the first resurrection.

The declaration that there was nothing in the Ark save the tables of stone on which was inscribed the law, seems at first to be in conflict with the Apostle's statement in Heb. 9:4, where he mentions also the golden pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded. We are to remember, however, that this description related to the Tabernacle and not to the Temple. The golden bowl of manna which did not corrupt was a type or illustration of the immortality or incorruptibility which the Lord has provided for the royal priesthood, and the budded rod was a reminder that the blessing and fruitfulness and privilege of service belong to the antitypical Levite, but as types both of these will end in the present dispensation. They met with the Tabernacle conditions; they will not be needed in the future conditions of glory, honor, and immortality represented by the Temple, because there the glorious things typified by these will have been fully entered into by the overcomers of the church. But the law will still be an integral part of the divine covenant. As the Apostle explains the fulfilling of the law is love, and love never faileth. It will always be the divine requirement and essential to participation in any of the blessings connected with the divine favor represented in the Ark of the covenant.

While the priests proceeded with their work of placing the Ark, the Levites, "arrayed in white linen, having psalteries and harps, stood at the east of the [brazen] altar, with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets. It came to pass that the trumpeters and singers were *as one*, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voices with the trumpets, and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord saying, 'For he is good; for his mercy endureth forever,' that then the house [Temple] was filled with the cloud"—the peculiar pillar of cloud which symbolized the Lord's presence through the wilderness journey, and subsequently in connection with the Tabernacle, and now in the Temple, for the first time rested upon it. This, which outwardly had the appearance of a cloud in the sanctuary on the mercy seat, represented an extreme brightness —so great that the priests could no longer remain in the Holy.

But meantime the King explained to the people the significance of the Temple, that it was the house of God and built under divine direction, given to himself and to his father David. Then standing near the altar of the court, spreading forth his hands toward heaven, he prayed a most beautiful prayer, and one which we recognize as prophetically directed, and as teaching us the purpose and object of the great antitypical Temple constructed by the antitypical Solomon. The literal Temple was to be the place toward which all the Israelites should look as God's dwelling place, the center of his power, authority, forgiveness and blessing and help in every time of need. So in due time, when the spiritual Temple shall have been constructed and dedicated and filled with divine power, it will be the center toward which all who would approach God shall look for help and assistance and blessing and forgiveness, toward which they shall make their prayers, and in which they shall realize the manifestation of divine power and blessing on their behalf.

After Solomon's dedicatory prayer was finished, the Lord openly manifested his favor toward the King and all the people by accepting their sacrifices with fire from heaven, as we read: "When Solomon had made an end of praying the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of Jehovah filled the house [the Temple]. . . . . And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down and the glory of the Lord was upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement and worshipped and praised the Lord, saying For he is good, for his mercy endureth forever' "—probably joining with the Levites in singing Psalm 136.

It is noteworthy that the Levites and the people did not sing of divine wrath never ending, but of divine mercy *forever*. This, however, according to the strict significance of the Hebrew word, does not mean "without an end," but "to an end"—that is to say, that divine mercy shall be exercised to its completeness, to its fulfillment, until every creature shall have been brought to a knowledge of the Lord and his goodness and to an opportunity of knowing him and of benefiting by the great promise made to Abraham and symbolized in the Ark of the covenant, through which all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Similarly in the last book of the Bible we read of the song of Moses and the Lamb, sung by the antitypical priests, saying, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways thou King of saints. Who shall not reverence thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy: for all peoples shall come and worship before thee, because thy judgments [righteous dealings] are made manifest." (Rev. 15:3, 4) This is the song which none but the overcomers can truly appreciate and sing at the present time, but by and by—when the glory of the Lord shall have filled the Temple—the peoples, the multitudes, shall learn that song, shall learn of the divine mercy, and as a prophecy it shall be fulfilled and all peoples shall bow to the Lord to confess his goodness and his love and to enjoy at the hands of the antitypical Solomon (the Christ), as prophet, priest and king of the new dispensation, the opportunity of full reconciliation to God and full return to the perfect conditions of mind and of body, and to life everlasting, lost by Adam's disobedience, and brought back by the great Redeemer for as many as will receive it upon God's terms.

Naturally and properly our chief interest centered in the antitypical Temple, the antitypical Solomon, the antitypical priests and antitypical people. There is a sense in which every member of the new creation may be said to be individually a temple of the holy Spirit now, a sense in which every individual should build up his own faith and character from the divine promises and by compliance with the divine requirements, but this is not the larger antitypical view of the Temple. In its antitypical sense Solomon's Temple certainly represented the glorified Christ, head and body, built up of living stones, as the Apostle Peter explains. Under the supervision of the anointed, the work of gathering the various stones for the Temple has been in progress throughout the Gospel age. As not any and every stone was taken for Solomon's Temple, but only those of specific dimensions and peculiar pattern, in accordance with the plan, so it is with the antitypical, the living, stones. Only a certain class are approached at all, and only those which being cut out are first roughly quarried out and found suitable in character and dimensions are tooled at all, and only those which under the tool yield proper results and become conformed to the intended pattern will ultimately find their place in the glorious Temple which our Lord as the great master-builder is constructing. As before intimated, this accounts for the fact that various agents, even Satan himself, may be used of the Lord as servants for the chiseling and polishing and fitting and preparing of these living stones for their future glorious position. Viewed in this light what a satisfaction may come from the trials and difficulties which all the Lord's people are sure to experience, and without some of which they would be justified in fearing that they are not sons but bastards. (Heb. 12:8) Only those who have some such insight into the divine program can ever reach that position to which the Apostle Paul attained, who claimed that he could also rejoice in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience and patience experience and experience hope, which will not be put to shame, but which will be rewarded eventually in the glorious joint-heirship in the kingdom promised by our Lord to his faithful.

To our understanding of the teaching of Scripture, the fact that the materials for Solomon's Temple were prepared before its construction began, and were so perfectly fitted that no iron tool needed to be used in the construction, indicates that the antitype, this Gospel age, has seen the preparation of the various living stones, which when ready were marked of the Lord to their positions in the Temple, and fell asleep in Jesus until the time for the first resurrection, the time for the construction of the Temple. To our understanding we are now living in that time and have been in it since 1878. The living stones of the past have been brought together and the Temple is merely waiting for the few living stones which are still under process of trial and disciplining, chiseling and polishing. The resurrec-

tion "change" coming to each of these in turn places him with the fellow-members of the grand Temple of the Lord. The picture of the bringing of the Ark would seem to be another illustration of the same lesson—the bringing of the members of the body of Christ from the Tabernacle or earthly condition to the heavenly or Temple condition. Soon the Ark will be in place, and priests and Levites and people are generally learning to sing of the Lord's mighty love and that his mercy endureth to completeness—to the full limit to which mercy could be of service, benefit or advantage, to the completion, when every ear shall have heard, every eye shall have seen and every heart shall have shown appreciation, shall have come to a knowledge of the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Let us, as day after day rolls by, remember our threefold relationship then to this Temple: (1) We are still in process of preparation as living stones. (2) As members of the Royal Priesthood carrying the Ark we are marching from the Tabernacle into the Temple condition; some of our number have already entered in and some are still on the way. (3) As the Lord's people the time has come for us to know, to sing with the spirit and understanding, the new song of divine mercy, justice, love and truth. Let us be faithful in each of these respects, fulfilling our parts, and ere long our course will be ended and the glory of the Lord will fill the Temple. It will be after this that the people will take up the refrain,—for his mercy endureth forever—to completeness.

Our Golden Text is in line with the foregoing. Those who hear the invitation to become members of the house of God, the house of sons, the antitypical Temple, and who receive the invitation into good and honest hearts, are indeed made glad, "Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound." We couple with this a similar expression by the same poet prophet, who declares, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Not in earthly houses, not in earthly temples, do we hope to dwell forever; but those who become members, living stones in the spiritual house, the heavenly Temple now under construction, will indeed dwell in the house of the Lord forever. For them to go out would mean the destruction of the house, for of it they will be members in particular; as the Lord declares they will be pillars in the house of the Lord, and the ministers of his grace and truth to all the people. This text will be true also of the world during the Millennial age. All mankind will then be invited to approach the Lord in worship, to approach the spiritual Temple, the Christ, and through the Christ to approach the Father; and all who shall hear that message and who shall obey it will be glad indeed, even as the message brought by the angels at the birth of Jesus intimated that eventually the tidings of great joy shall be unto all people.

A GREATER THAN SOLOMON

1 KINGS 10:1-10.—DECEMBER 20.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"*When the righteous are in authority the people rejoice.*"—Prov. 29:2.

By the time Solomon had reached his fortieth year, under the blessing of wisdom which he craved of the Lord, he had made the kingdom of Israel famous throughout the then civilized world. His kingdom connected with Egypt on the south, with the desert on the east and the Mediterranean Sea on the north and west, except that small portion known as Phoenicia, whose king, Hiram, had made a league with Solomon and assisted him greatly in the materials and workmen for the temple. Solomon's ships and those of Hiram were known to all the nations of that time as far east as Judea and as far north west as Britain. The account of the wealth which flowed to him is astounding. His table dishes were made of gold, a thousand shields for his mighty men were of gold, and other things in proportion were magnificent in the largest degree. The brilliancy of his mind found expression not only in financial channels, but his army was equipped on a scale of equal magnificence. Fourteen hundred chariots were imported, and thousands of horses for these and for a cavalry detachment for his army. Literary matters were not neglected; he wrote many sonnets and spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his fame in respect to these matters had extended to all parts of the world.

Our lesson deals specially with the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon's court. She herself declares that she had heard of his fame and had come to see him with her own eyes, and that notwithstanding her great expectations she found that not one-half of his greatness had been told her. The distance she came is estimated at 1,500 miles, and as the means for traveling was by camels, and their average speed twenty miles per day, it is estimated that the journey to Jerusalem and back to her home consumed five months; besides whatever time she spent at Solomon's court. Unquestionably it would be much less inconvenient today to journey around the earth than it was for the Queen of Sheba to visit Solomon.

Tradition tells us that the Queen sent her ambassadors with a letter to King Solomon before she went herself. With them she sent 500 youths dressed as maidens, with instructions that they were to behave accordingly in the presence of Solomon. She sent also a thousand costly rugs inwrought with gold and silver, and a crown composed of finest pearls and gold hyacinths; also camel-loads of musk, amber, aloes and other precious products of South Arabia. She added a closed casket containing an unperforated pearl, a diamond intricately pierced and a crystal goblet. A letter accompanied these gifts as follows: "As a true prophet thou wilt no doubt be able to distinguish the youths from the maidens and divine the contents of the enclosed casket, to pierce the pearl and thread the diamond and to fill the goblet with water that has not dropped from the clouds nor gushed forth from the earth."

The legend declares that when this embassage reached Jerusalem King Solomon told the bearers the contents of the letter before they presented it, and made light of their mighty problems. He caused the thousand slaves to wash their hands and faces and from the manner in which they applied the water detected their sex. He directed a fiery young horse to be ridden through the camp at the top of speed, and on its return caused its copious perspiration to be collected in a goblet. The pearl he pierced by some process known to him. The threading of the diamond with its crooked perforation puzzled him for a moment, but at length he inserted a small worm, which wound its way through, leaving a silken thread behind it. He dismissed the ambassadors without receiving their presents. When the emissaries reached the Queen of Sheba, their reports of these matters determined her to visit King Solomon in person. The account of her visit and her astonishment are recorded in this lesson.

We are not informed as to the character of her questions, many of which quite probably were in the nature of conundrums, after the custom of that time. Everything connected with this story, however, assures us that Solomon was truly a wonderful man, that his mental powers were great and active. Nothing illustrates this better than the useful and expensive water works and arrangments which he provided for the capital city. So far as is known these were the first of the kind in the world and very much resembled the superior arrangements of our day. The fact that, although constructed 2,500 years ago, they have recently been partially put into operation again, indicates clearly the solidity of their construction. Truly we see that the Lord's promise to the King was abundantly fulfilled, that he was wiser and richer than all others of his day and subsequently. The Queen was attracted specially by the sumptuous and methodical arrangements of the King's palace, his provision for the ministers of the realm, their uniform, etc., and the grand stairway which led up to the Temple. The expression "There was no more spirit in her," corresponds very closely to an expression of our day—it took her breath away.

Our Lord indicated what otherwise would not have been quite apparent—namely, that Solomon's wisdom and glory, prosperity and peace, were typical; that the antitype of the Solomon is the Christ. Our Lord spoke as never man spoke, the people marveled at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth, and his fame during the three and one-half years of his ministry spread abroad;—yet so far from being recognized by his own people he was crucified as an enemy of their nation and an enemy of God. Referring to the matter he says, "The Queen of Sheba shall rise up in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here."—Matt. 12:42.

By these words the Lord indicated his approval of the desire for wisdom evinced by the Queen. Indeed this is the spirit of the Scriptures—growth in knowledge, grace and love, knowledge being essential to the development of character. Here we have set before us a lesson which our Lord taught in the words, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled"—blessed are they who hunger and thirst for wisdom, for knowledge, for understanding of the good and true, knowing that they shall be blessed of the Lord and shall find that which they seek. The Lord's words were a reproof for his own nation and indicated that they were careless, indifferent respecting the truth. It is still more important for us of today to notice that the same spirit of

indifference prevails in nominal spiritual Israel. As the slightest suggestion of the heavenly wisdom manifested in our Lord's words and deeds should have kindled enthusiasm and zeal in nominal Israel, which would have hungered and thirsted for the truth and by seeking would have found the truth, so likewise today what confidence we have respecting the Lord and his character and plan should awaken every spiritual Israelite and lead him to seek the great fountain of wisdom.

And as at the first advent the "Israelites indeed" were attracted to the Lord and learned of him, so in spiritual Israel those who are Israelites indeed are attracted to the Lord and are taught of him today; but as the Israelites at the Lord's first advent were few in number as compared with the professing nation, so the Spiritual Israelites of today are few in number compared to the millions of nominal Christendom. But as it was not until after Solomon had built the great Temple of God at Jerusalem that his fame was spread abroad and his greatness manifested, so with the antitype Christ; not until he, the antitypical Solomon, has erected the great Temple of God, which is the church—not until it shall have been filled with the divine glory as the new creation—not until the new Jerusalem shall shine resplendently with the riches of divine grace and the brilliancy of the Lord's polished jewels, will the fame of Emmanuel reach to the uttermost parts of the earth. Then, as the Scriptures declare, "Many peoples shall go and say, Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Israel; he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem"—Isa. 2:2, 3.

All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. The whole world shall have its eyes opened to behold the riches of divine grace and wisdom embodied in Christ, head and body reigning in the New Jerusalem for the blessing and uplifting of the entire race of Adam—whosoever wills. The knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the face of the great deep, and there shall be no need to say every man to his neighbor and every man to his brother, Know thou the Lord, because all shall know him from the least even unto the greatest. (Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34) The wisdom of the great King, the antitype of Solomon, will be exercised on behalf of not merely the one nation of Israel but on behalf of all those who shall come into covenant relationship with the heavenly Father, typified by this people which entered into a covenant with the Lord, and which because of that covenant was the object of his mercy and care. In Revelation a little glimpse of the New Jerusalem is given and of the greater than Solomon who will be the light of it, and we are told that the nations shall walk in the light of it and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it—Rev. 21:22, 24.

The Queen's astonishment at what she found, and her declaration that the half had not been told her, reminds us of the Scriptural declaration respecting the greater than Solomon and the wonderful kingdom glories in reservation for his faithful. We read: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him." Now we know in part and see as through an obscure glass, but then we shall see as we are seen and know as we are known, and be like our Lord and share his glories.—1 Cor. 2:9; 13:12

The Queen's exulting remarks at the conclusion of her visit were, "Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee and hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God which delighteth in thee to set thee on the throne of Israel; because the Lord loved Israel forever, therefore made he thee King to do judgment and justice."

The greater than Solomon, in harmony with the divine arrangement, has prepared to have his faithful servants of the present time with him to share his glory and his kingdom, and the blessings of that time will be specially theirs. Happy those men who will be in his presence, who will see him as he is and be like him, and be the recipients of his favors. O blessed thought! O words with heavenly wisdom fraught!

And although the blessings of the Millennial kingdom will come first and chiefly to the church of this Gospel age, which will be associated with the Lord in the kingdom glory and sit at meat with him and participate in his honors and be blessed by his presence and wisdom, yet indeed a great blessing will remain for the world. As the Queen expressed it of the typical King, that God's blessing upon Israel was manifested in choosing him for King, so God's blessing to the world of mankind will be manifested in the establishment of Messiah's kingdom, which is to bless all the families of the earth and to grant them an opportunity of coming back to covenant relationship with God, and thus eventually, if they will be obedient to his judgments and justice, back to all that was lost in Adam, with superadded favors and mercies.

By faith some of us have heard of the Lord's fame in advance of the establishment of his Kingdom; by faith some of us have come from afar and offered him our treasures, laying our all at his feet; by faith these have been accepted of him, and instead he has given us exceeding great and precious promises and hopes far outweighing and outvaluing the little all that we gave to him.

Although Solomon's wisdom and greatness and riches and honor as the king typified the greatness of the Christ in the Millennial kingdom, his subsequent manifestation of weakness, causing the decay of his greatness, is not to be esteemed as typical, for of the antitype it is declared that of the greatness of his kingdom there shall be no end. Nor is this type alone in this particular. Similarly David was a type in some particulars; so was Moses a type in some particulars and not in others; so was Adam a figure of him who was to come, yet not a figure in his transgression and condemnation. Our Golden Text can only have a partial application to any kingdom of man during "this present evil world," of which Satan has attempted control as the prince thereof. Owing to the inherent weakness of our race even its best specimens are far from absolute righteousness, and consequently no government of the present time, no government under imperfect men, can fulfill the predictions of our Golden Text. This is implied throughout the entire Scripture, in which the Lord promises that he will establish his kingdom amongst men, and that under Emmanuel's government all the families of the earth shall be blessed. It is for this reason that the Lord's people still pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven;" it is for this reason that the Apostle declares that the "whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now"—waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.

The sons of God, the little flock with their Head the Lord Jesus, will by and by constitute the righteous who will be in authority, in power, in governmental control of the world by divine arrangement, based upon the great atonement sacrifice. Of that time and of that great ruler, head and body, it is written, "In his day shall the righteous flourish" In his day Satan shall be bound a thousand years to deceive people no more, and all the influences of righteousness and truth shall be let loose, that the world may be flooded with the light and knowledge of the glory of God. Under those blessed conditions whosoever will may take of the water of life freely and live forever.

INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

It was my privilege to have an interesting conversation with an Adventist preacher a few months ago. The brother referred to being at our home on business, I handed him several "Old Theology Tracts." The next day he called again, and the conversation which took place was in substance as follows:

He said to me: "My dear brother, I have come to your house this afternoon to try, if possible, to rid you of the terrible errors which the tracts you gave me yesterday support."

I replied that I certainly appreciated the brotherly intention, but assured the visitor that his attempt would be fruitless.

"Well," said he, "you will at least talk with me upon the subject."

"Certainly," I replied; "but since I have been in the truth but a few months, and since I am your junior by many years, and not wishing to seem disrespectful, I ask one 'handicap.'"

"On being asked what it was, I told him that I preferred him, instead of attacking my views, to question me concerning them and allow me to give a reason for the hope within me. He readily acquiesced, stipulating that all views must have a "Thus saith the Lord."

He then asked me concerning our erroneous (?) idea of future probation. I read Acts 3:20; Jno. 1:19; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6; 4:10; Heb. 2:9; etc., and he tried to refute these testimonies by argument and a feeble attempt at quoting Scripture. Then taking his own standpoint I quoted Isa. 65:17-20, and asked him how sinners (according to his belief) could be in the new heavens and earth.

"My dear brother," he replied, "when you reach the 20th verse you should know that God goes away back in his dates hundreds of years."

I replied, "There is one thing sadly lacking in your argument—namely, your stipulated 'Thus saith the Lord.'"

After a painful pause, he said, "I simply cannot quote Scripture today, and my ideas do not seem as clear as usual.

I hoped to convince you of your error, but I see you are too well established in it to be moved."

(Oh, how I thanked our heavenly Father for the encouragement thus brought to my heart!)

I asked him if he had ever read the Divine Plan of the Ages. He replied that he had done so, and that its author crossed the Bible, human reason and common sense, besides crossing his own arguments.

"If that is so, I replied, "I want to know it. Here is the book. Please show me his first error."

He nervously turned the pages of the book and said, "I don't seem to see any place now." I urged him to hunt, or, if he was very busy, to take the book home, and when he found such a place to show it me. After a few more spasmodic attempts he turned to me with a distressed look and said he was not familiar enough with the work to really find such places. After begging his pardon if anything in my manner was not becoming to my youth, I urged him to either become sufficiently acquainted with the book to warrant such assertions, or else be very cautious about bringing such accusations. He left me very soon, and despite the fact that he insisted to our neighbors that I was possessed of the devil, I rejoiced in the privilege of thus serving our Master. I truly realized that the brother's defeat was not occasioned by his inferiority as a student, for I am sure that he was recognized, and doubtless justly too, as a Bible scholar; and I realized then my own insufficiency, but perceived that God allowed the Truth to triumph, to encourage me at that time. This fills my heart with joy, and I can indeed say with the Apostle, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."

Yours in him,

W. H. B.—*Rhode Island.*

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

HUMILITY AT A DISCOUNT WITH CLERGY

The louder a man boasts of himself and the more domineering over others he becomes the more will he be reverenced. This is true in all religious circles today amongst the "clergy." It was so, too, in St. Paul's day. He pointed it out to the Corinthians, saying, in substance: The more a religious teacher brow-beats you and the more he exacts from you of money and reverence, the more you will esteem him. (2 Cor. 11:20) This still seems to be the trend of unbalanced human nature. It is exemplified in every church organization except the true one, where alone meekness, gentleness and patience are recognized as the proper adornments of Christ's representatives.

As an extreme example note the following proclamation of John Alex. Dowie to his deluded followers, clipped from his own publication:

"The time has come when the world shall no longer make money out of Zion investments, for Zion can now invest more profitably in Zion industries, through Zion's own Financial Institutions. Therefore I say to you, are you loyal to Zion when you are backing up worldly institutions outside when Zion needs your resources and your strength and can use these to God's glory, and to your increased prosperity? I say to you, and I say to Zion everywhere, that you will have to recognize fully the tremendous fact that I was within my rights and only fulfilling my Divinely imposed and positive duty when I issued the Command of September 21st. After due time given for the prayerful consideration of that Command, every man or woman throughout the world who says, 'I will not obey,' is asked to send in his or her resignation. If you will not obey, then I will know that you are outside of Zion. My responsibility as your leader, under God, will cease; for you will have found another leader, or be a 'wandering star.' . . . I do not want you in Zion. You are a curse to Zion and the quicker you get out the better off Zion will be."

HEBREW, INFIDEL, PREACHER

Felix Adler, rabbi and D. D., has been discoursing on prayer to New Yorkers. He said.—

"Prayer also gives vent to that instinct in the human heart to worship God. But here, too, in regard to worship, I cannot sympathize with the kind of worship of which we do so much nowadays—characterized by the posture in praying—by kneeling. When a congregation falls on its knees I recoil. I find it repugnant to my whole nature.

"Prayer is said to have the effect of putting before us a divine model. But the idea of God, when it rises in the mind, fills it with a kind of nebulous light, but doesn't present the clear outlines of a model.

"I think men are really better and abler examples for behavior and serve us better as models than deity—such men, for instance, as Socrates, Brutus and Lincoln. They furnish definite models, not a vague notion of perfection; they do us good. Let us have moral heroes, human exemplars."

* * *

Mark how vain Evolutionists speedily become. Pluming themselves on their humility in acknowledging protoplasm, jellyfish and monkeys as their progenitors, they pride themselves on having attained so high a dignity that it causes a shudder to see others bow to him whom they acknowledge as their Creator.

As for Mr. Adler's preference for a human rather than a divine model, let us remember that he rejects the human model provided by Jehovah—"the man Christ Jesus." Let us remember, too, that the horrible "doctrines of devils" promulgated by Satan (through Heathen, Jewish and Christian "Doctors of Divinity") so misrepresent the plan and character of God as to make any half-decent man a "model" of justice in comparison.

Thank God that Satan is soon to be "bound," that he may *deceive* the nations (peoples) no more. Then Felix Adler's eyes and all the other blind eyes shall be opened, and they shall see the glorious character of the great Creator. Then Felix Adler and all others will bow the knee: as it is written, "Unto me every knee shall bow." If he bow willingly and adoringly he may then go up the "highway of holiness" to everlasting life under the guidance of the wonderful teachers of the Millennium. If he refuse to bow his *heart* he, with all such, will "perish" in the Second Death.

REV. DR. DIX WARNS THE GREEDY RICH

In the pulpit of the richest church in America Dr. Dix preached a Thanksgiving Day discourse of which the following is an extract:

"The account between God and man is still open, our debt to him still unpaid. True, there is ample material whereof to bring a thank offering to Almighty God.

"Peace is within our borders. The horrible nightmare of the past winter induced by the coal strike no longer makes heads sick and hearts faint. The spirit of anarchy has done no more murder in high places. The state is secure from foreign assaults and domestic disaffection. For these and countless other instances of the divine favor and goodness we do give thanks."

Then the eloquent preacher drew the other side of the picture and surprised his hearers with these words:

"Still, shadows fall, and under them we add intercession to thanksgiving. What casts some of those shadows? Class alienation. The insolence of wealth and the angry discontent of the poor, the growth of riotous living, the misuse of money and its reckless squandering on pleasure and pride; education without religion; the steady breaking up of homes by divorce and remarriage; the appearance of vast systems of religious imposture and their success in making converts; the spirit of gambling in every place where it can be practiced.

"Others are the cold-blooded assaults on private property by those who attack corporations and drag them down to bankruptcy in order to enrich themselves; the insecurity of life through contempt of the law, and the freedom of assassins, whether sane or insane, to wreak their will upon their innocent victims; the steady decline of womanhood from its old ideals and its deterioration through copying the ways and invading the sphere of men. These are some of the things that cast a shadow on the years. No one sees how they are to be stopped, and no one who thinks it over from a Christian standpoint can doubt that if they are not stopped the harvest will be frightful beyond telling."

HIGHER CRITICS CONTRADICT EACH OTHER

Rev. Sheraton of Wycliffe College, Canada, recently, defending the Pentateuch, said:

"One good reason for rejecting the radical theory of the higher critics is that their criticisms have been nothing less than a series of speculations since their inception, each one contradicting all those that preceded it. Originally the crude objection was made that Moses could not have written the Pentateuch, because of the illiterate character of the age in which he lived. Discoveries in Bible lands, however, make it abundantly plain that there was a regular mania for writing and recording in ancient Egypt; and that tablets were erected

and correspondence took place in Canaan before the Exodus. Moreover, recent research makes it evident that such an accurate knowledge was had by the sacred writer of the geography, arts, social and religious customs of Egypt, that no one but an eye-witness could have so described the conditions. No one living at a remote age could have drawn upon his imagination for the facts.

"It was objected at a later date, in 1866, that the body of laws in the middle books were placed there after the Babylonian exile; and this was a portion that the critics had hitherto declared to be the oldest. No unanimity was shown on their part. Objection was also made to the diversity of style appearing in Deuteronomy and by a process of vivisection thirty-six verses in that book were actually attributed to 32 authors. Almost all great literary works have been attacked in the same way, and in just as plausible a manner. Homer's authorship of the Iliad and Cæsar's production of Commentaries were disputed for years because of the diversity of style. Sir Walter Besant, who finished a novel commenced by a dead friend, said no one had ever pointed out the place where he took up the work. The critics were captious and magnified differences, as the result of their restless analyses was fruitless, tedious and repulsive.—*Toronto News.*"

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT.—DEC. 1st, 1902, TO DEC. 1st, 1903.

"Onward, Christian Soldiers," seems to be our great Captain's command to our Society—in its every department. When recording the year's results each December we have been amazed at "what God hath wrought," so great results from so imperfect instrumentalities. We are continually reminded of the feeding of the five thousand on five barley loaves and two small fishes, and the twelve baskets full of fragments left over. Each yearly report we have feared would be our best; not seeing how the following year could be as favorable. And just so is this year's report: Excellent, splendid, better than we could have surmised. The Lord be praised! We do not see how 1904 can equal or surpass 1903, but past experiences lead us to expect greater and still greater blessings from the great Chief Reaper in his service.

One of the encouraging features of the work is, that the newly interested seem to grasp the Truth quickly, thoroughly, and with a self-consuming zeal which stimulates afresh those who have been longer in the way. As an instance we mention a young woman of less than twenty years who, during the Eaton-Russell Debates in October, fully consecrated her life to the Lord, set about a systematic study of the *Dawn* volumes, and so on, resolutely sacrificing the comforts of an elegant home, became a colporteur, and began to carry the water of life to others fainting by the way. She realized herself to be an "eleventh hour" laborer, and besought the Lord for privileges and blessing in the vineyard. The language of her heart was expressed in the words of the hymn:

"The hour is come to do and dare,
To win a heavenly prize."

Did she succeed, you ask? Surely; where faith and zeal go hand in hand to the Lord for service he rarely if ever rejects them; guidance, direction, alone was needed, and we were privileged to supply it. As a result that sister is circulating from fourteen to forty volumes of *Millennial Dawn* daily—delivering from 200 to 600 sermons daily, reckoning each chapter a sermon.

Some seem to get a worldly view of this matter of colporteuring, and think of it as unworthy the time and service of the well-to-do and educated;—well enough for those who have no other business or trade, or who have no capital wherewith to engage in "something better." The contrary view is the proper one, namely, that this in God's esteem is one of the most honorable services rendered in his name to the household of faith. As the "pilgrim" brethren do the service of elders, so the "colporteurs" and "volunteers" are doing the service of deacons and deaconesses. And the more education, refinement and natural ability are brought to the service, the greater number of talents invested, the greater are the possibilities of grand results to the glory of our King and the assistance of his "brethren." Those who feel that their talents are too many or too valuable to be used in the Lord's service, but not too valuable to be used in law or medicine or merchandising or other money-winning employment, do not properly value the privilege of laboring in the vineyard—do not rightly value the great rewards promised to those who forsake all to have the privilege of kingdom service and self-denial now, and of kingdom glory by and by.

True, many long for such service, but are so handicapped by earthly obligations that they cannot do as they would—cannot engage in colporteuring—should not so engage. We doubt not that with these the Lord, who knoweth the heart, reckons to their credit all the self-sacrifices of this sort they would be glad to make if the conditions favored. But such will be active along some other lines of service for the truth and the brethren. Faithfulness in all possible ways will doubtless bring them eventually new doors of opportunity.

While increase of interest is to be noted all along the line, we accord first place to the colporteur branch of the service. The figures given in the summary following will no doubt astonish all of our readers, the total sales of *Dawns* being nearly three times last year's total. These were nearly all in cloth binding, too, whereas last year the majority were in paper covers. The cloth binding is much better appreciated, better cared for and displayed; and thus does more good.

We have one hundred and forty-three colporteurs at work now, with many additions promised as soon as they can arrange their affairs. They are a noble band, laboring not for the meat that perisheth merely, but specially for the present and the prospective joys of the Lord.

Many of the great men in history, who won fame and renown as statesmen, soldiers, authors and scientists, or gained a world-wide reputation in commercial life, laid the foundation of their greatness, perhaps gained that knowledge of men and human nature which is such a factor in great minds, by acting as canvassing agents. Napoleon Bonaparte, when a poor lieutenant, took the agency for a work entitled "L'Histoire de la Revolution." In the foyer of the great Palace of the Louvre can be seen today the Emperor's canvassing outfit, with the long list of subscribers he secured. George Washington, when young, canvassed around Alexandria, Va., and sold over two hundred copies of a work entitled "Bydell's American Savage." Mark Twain was a book agent. Longfellow sold books by subscription. Jay Gould, when starting in life, was a canvasser. Daniel Webster paid his second term's tuition at Dartmouth by handling "De Tocqueville's America," in Merrimac County, New Hampshire. Gen. U. S. Grant canvassed for Irving's "Columbus." James G. Blaine began life as a canvasser for a "Life of Henry Clay." Bismarck, when at Heidelberg, spent a vacation in canvassing for one of Blumenbach's handbooks. None of these, however, labored thus for the King of kings. None of these carried to their fellow creatures so precious a gospel. None of these invited saints in the name of the Lord to prepare for a share in the throne with their Redeemer, or sought thus by faithfulness to make their own calling and election sure by attesting their loving devotion to the Lord and his cause, to the sacrifice of some earthly privileges; —esteemed in comparison as but "loss and dross."

ZION'S WATCH TOWER CIRCULATION INCREASING

While the work has increased greatly during the past year and the *Watch Tower's* regular issues are now over 20,000, this, although very gratifying, seems less important to us, as we believe it is less important in the Lord's esteem than the evident increase in deep spirituality witnessed in so many ways—by the letters we receive, by the energy displayed, etc. We remark, by the way, that we continually receive evidences that there are thousands of interested *Dawn* readers who are not on the *Tower list.* Surely this ought not to be so. We should be in constant touch with all who are of like precious faith. Generally the reason given is scarcity of money. We know not how to tell these dear brethren and sisters that they are as welcome to the *Watch Tower* as to the air they breathe; but they must request it, even as they must inhale the air. Those who do not like to ask for it as "the Lord's poor," may, if they prefer, ask it on credit year after year, and if never able to send the money they may at any time so inform us and have the debt cancelled. What can we say more than this? We merely add that we are *conienienced* by those whose renewals (whatever their kind) come to the office before January 1st each year.

We are expecting great things for the next few years in the spread of the truth. We expect that the regular issues of the *Watch Tower* will be 40,000 copies (representing 80,000 readers) before 1908. We want the cooperation of all of the Lord's people to this end. As the editor can do a part in this not open to others, so others can do a part which is not open to the editor. Let us continue to co-labor, hoping by and by unitedly to hear the Chief Reaper say, "Well done! good, faithful servants. Enter into the joys of your Lord."

THE VOLUNTEER WORK

If space permitted we would enjoy giving details respecting this great work—explaining the practical methods adopted, by which in some large cities practically every house was vis-

ited—especially in Boston, Washington, Pittsburg and Allegheny, and their suburbs, for ten miles or more in every direction. Over three millions of tracts were thus used; besides the ordinary circulation of about two millions of other assorted tracts. Great as this work is, and far beyond all other tract distribution in the world, it can be more than doubled next year, if the friends in all other cities can arouse the same zeal displayed by some of those mentioned. For instance, at Washington practically the entire church, of about sixty engaged in the work. The trouble there was that with so many hands this much enjoyed service was too quickly accomplished. We are preparing "ammunition" for next year, and hope to be ready to supply orders in April. Let all prepare carefully and prayerfully for the opportunities of 1904. Remember that much depends on the selection of earnest-hearted and wise-headed captains and lieutenants, as well as on the zeal of the church. Surely those who know no better way to use their time or to render service to the truth, should be careful how they disregard this grand opportunity. The tracts are provided *free;* and the more of respectability, education and good address anyone can put into the service, the greater is likely to be the favorable impression to read and consider these messages from our King to nominal "Christendom" to select the "wheat" class.

THE TOWER-DAWN A SUCCESS

The special issue of Dawn I. in *Watch Tower* form has been well received. Its price (5c per copy, including postage) is so cheap that it permits many to send it to their friends. One brother has sent about 300 to his friends and is still sending us large lists. A fund has been provided, by means of which this edition may be sent to every English-speaking minister and missionary in the world. We already have the lists, and about 50,000 have been sent out.

The cheapness of this edition and also the handsome cloth-bound edition makes unnecessary the old paper-bound edition, which will be discontinued soon as present stock is exhausted.

OUR CORRESPONDENCE BIBLE SCHOOL

Letters come to us from all parts of the world making inquiries on the lines of Bible study and for assistance in applying the teachings of the Word to the affairs of daily life;—as well as business correspondence. We take pleasure in replying to these as lengthily as the questions seem to demand—frequently referring the inquirers to the more convenient and elaborate treatises of *Dawn* and the *Watch Tower.* We rejoice in such opportunities for service, and trust that any of the Lord's children who so desire will freely appeal to us for willing assistance along these lines.

Letters and cards received from Dec. 1, 1902, to Dec. 1, 1903 41,079

Letters and cards sent out from Dec. 1, 1902, to Dec. 1, 1903 37,810

THE PILGRIM SERVICE INCREASED

The Lord's guidance in regard to the "pilgrim" service is continually in evidence; not only in the words of appreciation coming constantly from those who have been blessed, but also in the evidences showing an increasing zeal and spirituality in their wake. This is not merely the result of the excellent discourses delivered by the "pilgrims," but also, and, in large part, a result of the exercise of energy necessary to the making of the arrangements for the "Pilgrim" and for the meetings. The activity and commminglings incident to the preparations, bring a blessing, according to the divine promise that he who assists in watering others gets watered also himself.

Elsewhere we ask for brief postal card answers to questions useful to us in connection with this service, from those desiring visits during the year 1904. Please respond promptly.

During the past year 25 persons took part in this "Pilgrim" work; 2,647 parlor meetings and 1,702 public meetings were held;—total, 4,349. The distance traversed in connection with these services (the editor's trip to Europe included) was 154,214 miles. The expense was $7,956—a very modest amount for so extensive services. The one day and annual conventions are also reckoned in account; but not the convention expenses, which are borne by the inviting churches.

CONVENTIONS OF THE YEAR

These we have reason to believe were appreciated and profitable. The one day Conventions are chiefly for the benefit of those "brethren" yet in Babylon, who are hungering for and seeking present truth; the general Conventions are chiefly for those already fairly established in it. Both are proving so helpful that we consider it the Lord's will that they be continued, as per regular announcements.

THE SOCIETY'S FOREIGN MISSIONS

"Darkness covers the earth [civilized] and gross darkness the heathen." Our Society is making no effort to reach those in grossest darkness, believing that to be the work designed of the Lord for the Millennium. We have more than enough to do in dispelling the darkness prevalent in Christendom. For these are our labors and prayers, as were those of the Apostles. —Eph. 1:13.

The British Branch is well established, though by no means self-sustaining yet. A splendid work is in progress everywhere in Great Britain, and it is extending and broadening and deepening. Evidently, the Lord has "much people" in those islands. (Acts 18:10) The editor was much refreshed by the manifestations of love and zeal everywhere encountered during his brief pilgrim trip thither last Spring. Indeed, we know that all *Watch Tower* readers shared this through our reports, as was abundantly testified by your letters to us subsequently. A separate report of the British Branch is subjoined.

Work is commenced at Copenhagen and Stockholm for the benefit of our Scandinavian brethren;—to put into their hands the present truth and to cooperate with those who have already been blessed with the opening of the eyes of their understanding. We hope to have more to report in the way of works a year from now.

The German Branch has opened under fairly prosperous conditions, yet not what we had hoped for. The oneness of the "body" and of the "harvest" work does not seem to be sufficiently appreciated by the German brethren. It is proposed, however, to continue the mission during 1904, giving the field a fair trial and looking to the Lord for guidance as to whether or not there are more favorable fields for the use of consecrated time and money. Meantime Brother Koetitz has succeeded Brother Henninges as the Society's representative at Elberfeld, and the latter has passed to a new field, as below.

The work in French and Italian now centered at Yverdon, Switzerland, is being given a push, and promises well for the time. We are spending considerable money for free reading matter to be scattered all over Germany, Switzerland, France and Italy, as the Lord may stir up the hearts of his people to cooperate in the "harvest" work. We will do some witnessing. The Lord will use the truth to gather the "wheat" and permit Satan to sift it clean. Experience seems to teach that the principal crop of ripe "wheat" will be gathered in Great Britain and America, where freedom has more or less prepared the way for the truth amongst all nationalities. We must "harvest" while it is called day and where the wheat principally is.

THE AUSTRALIAN MISSION

Little has yet been accomplished in Australia, yet everything we are able to learn about it seems to imply that it should be ripe for the sickle of truth. Its population is chiefly British and we believe intelligent and liberal-minded. Its claims appealed to us as being in line with the leadings of the Lord, and accordingly Brother Henninges has been dispatched thither to open a Melbourne Branch or Mission.

Brother Henninges has had a large experience in Allegheny, and later in London, and is, we believe, every way competent to push the work there. He will doubtless make it a success if the conditions are as favorable as we hope—if the Lord has "much people" there Although this is in the nature of an experiment, we have already shipped nearly eight tons of literature there—chiefly *Dawns*—so great is our confidence.

We bespeak for all the dear "Yoke-fellows" (Phil. 4:3) in foreign fields, as well as in the home pilgrim service and in the colporteur service afar and near, the prayers and cooperation of all who recognize the one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one harvest work, and who see that the time for cooperation is short. Yea, as we see how few there are loyal to the truth, and how many are their opponents, "within and without," let it draw us the closer to all whom the Lord has counted worthy to receive the truth and worthy to permit to remain in its light. Let us pray for one another and in every way assist one another to "stand" and to "fight a good fight." Love of the brethren is classed in Scripture as one of the evidences of the new life—with what propriety each who has this love can judge.

Our continued prayers ascend daily, for all the dear co-laborers and for all the Lord's true sheep—known to us as well as unknown. Brethren, pray for us. Under the Lord's providence our position in this "harvest" work specially draws the fire of the great enemy and his blind and misdirected servants. It is a comfort to us to know of your Christian love and prayers in behalf of the editor and his faithful co-laborers. And amongst these do not forget the 32 loyal office helpers at Allegheny.

THE FINANCIAL END

With the opening of wider ranges of labor and influence the Lord sent an increase of the necessary means;—our money

receipts for the past year will surprise you. This is another evidence that the Lord's hand is guiding the "harvest" work; —grace sufficient to endure added trials; and money sufficient for the increased expenses, and that without either direct or indirect appeals for money. The truth stirred the willing-hearted to do what they could, and the Lord gave the increase. We dare scarcely hope for as large opportunities or as ample means for next year, but we leave all in the Lord's hand and will seek to do with our might according to the opportunities and means the Lord will supply. All who have participated in the results summarized below, either through active service of the truth or by money contributions in its aid, or both (and this includes almost every *Watch Tower* subscriber), may well join us in giving thanks to the Lord for the showing.

It will be noticed that while the work more than doubled the expenses did not double. We believe it to be a part of our stewardship to see that not one dollar of these consecrated funds is wasted. The dear co-laborers join heartily in this spirit. None here receives wages—merely expenses—and all rejoice to keep these at the lowest notch, and each feels that he cannot do too much for our King and his "brethren." We are entirely safe in saying that no such work was ever before done, nor at so relatively small a cost. But then neither was such a gospel ever before proclaimed. "What manner of persons ought we to be?"

SUMMARY OF THE YEAR

Receipts.

Surplus on hand Dec. 1, 1903	$ 3,938.11
From Good Hopes and all other sources	39,526.08
Total	$43,464.19

Expenditures.

For "Pilgrim" expenses	$ 7,956.65
For publishing matter circulated free,—tracts, etc	21,678.02
For expenses, postage, etc., on same	5,026.49
For loss on *Dawns* incidental to rise in cost and our desire to keep retail price low and give Colporteurs every opportunity	2,014.71
For Foreign Mission accounts, on which there may be partial returns later on	5,694.21
	$42,370.08
Surplus remaining	$ 1,094.11

SUMMARY OF LITERATURE CIRCULATED FREE

Old Theology Tracts sent out, 5,487,700, representing 81,211,600 tract pages,—various languages.

Sample copies of *Zion's Watch Tower*, 198,590.

BOOKS AND BOOKLETS SOLD AT COST OR LESS

Millennial Dawns, all volumes and languages	210,961
Sundry booklets	63,057

MISCELLANEOUS

Letters and cards received	41,079
Letters and cards sent out	37,810

"Pilgrims," regular and special, 25. Visits, 1,411; Public meetings, 1,702; Parlor meetings, 2,647; Miles traveled, 154,214.

* * *

Praising God for past mercies, let us begin the service of the New Year with a renewal of our consecration vows; and with the thought that we are a year nearer to the glorious "change" and "well done" for which we hope. "Now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed."

REPORT OF BRITISH BRANCH

We give below Brother Hemery's Letter and Report. We all rejoice that the British Branch prospers, and hope that in another year there will be something to report respecting the "harvest" work in the lands afar.

Lest there should be some misunderstanding, we note the fact that the financial report takes no account of the cost of the tons of tracts sent from Allegheny, but merely of its circulation. We propose having the reports next year include cost of paper, printing, etc.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

We are gratified in being able to send a report showing increase in the various branches of the work. The sale of *Dawns* has advanced upon last year's figures by 3,000, while that of the lesser booklets also shows an increase. But notable progress is shown in the account of tract circulation—we have sent out 1,033,000 free tracts and *Towers*. Of this number 700,000 represent the Volunteer matter; the new method of distribution lending itself to more extended opportunities of service than the previous one did. But while much has been done, much more remains. The increases plainly indicate further possibilities, telling us that "The fields are white unto the harvest." We pray the "Lord of the harvest that he will send more laborers into his vineyard."

We believe your visit to us in the Springtime has, in the Lord's providence, done much to give a general impetus to the work in this part of the field. The brethren were stimulated to further assurance and zeal, and many new friends were made. Indeed, in view of the possibilities in these countries, it would appear that your early return is desirable. You will be glad to know that the work prospers in Ireland: the friends in Dublin especially were enthused by your visit there, and have, since then, sold a good many *Dawns*. The change of the British depot to its present address—brought about in harmony with your thought that this locality would be more desirable—already promises much advantage.

It has been our pleasure to have a pilgrim visit from Brother Henninges this fall. He reports that the meetings have been well attended, and the usual good interest maintained. We are sorry to have to say "good-bye" to him and Sr. Henninges, though we are glad the work in Australia is to be helped forward by them. We are grateful to the Lord for all his favors to us—for the privilege of knowing his truth, and for that of serving each other. We thank him for all that he has done, and are hopeful concerning that which remains. Continue to pray for us here, as we do for you, that his purposes may be worked out in us and that we may all be good "laborers" in the vineyard.

Your fellow-servant, in the Lord, J. HEMERY

EXPENDITURES.

	£	s.	d
Deficit from last year	542	18	8
Postage, Rent, Labor, Gas and sundry expenses	105	1	5
"Pilgrim" work expenses	86	4	9
	734	4	10
Tract fund receipts from Great Britain	411	2	0
Deficit	323	2	10

Dawns sold, chiefly by colporteurs	20,590
Booklets sold, chiefly by colporteurs	3,851
Tracts circulated free, chiefly by "Volunteer" method	1,033,700
These represented in pages	18,368,600
Letters and cards received	4,649
Letters and cards sent out	9,842

CHRISTMAS REVIEW

READING LESSON, PSALM 103—DECEMBER 27.

The lessons of the last quarter, dealing with Saul, David and Solomon, are fresh in our memories. Saul's great but wasted opportunities have impressed us with the thought that we also have great opportunities, and need to be on guard lest these should be wasted. Saul's opportunities were of an earthly kind, in connection with an earthly kingdom; ours relate to the everlasting glorious kingdom. His mistake was in failure to give his heart entirely to the Lord. Instead of doing this he sought to serve the Lord but to maintain a will of his own. Seeing how great was his mistake impresses upon us the importance of making our consecration full, complete, and then seeing to it that, by the Lord's assistance, we faithfully carry out the provisions of that consecration.

In David, Solomon's successor, we have a man after God's own heart—not in respect to all the affairs of his life, but in respect to his heart, his intentions, his holiness of will, of purpose. Seeing what God appreciated in David helps us to understand the better what he appreciates in all those who would please him. Not that we could hope to please God of ourselves,—but having accepted his grace in our hearts, having come under the robe of the Redeemer's imputed righteousness, and having realized ourselves accepted in the Beloved, then it must be the desire of our hearts to attain as nearly as possible to the divine standard in thought, word and deed. By so doing we are making our calling and election sure, for the Lord seeks only those to be his servants who worship him in spirit and in truth. He accepts us under Christ's merit because we have declared that we desire to be like Christ and to fulfil the Father's will. Our acceptance is with the view of giving us an opportunity to demonstrate the truthfulness of our assertions—to fulfil the covenant of self-sacrifice in obedience to the principles of righteousness. Failures surely will from time to time mark our very best endeavors, but so surely as we are of the David class, the beloved of the Lord, so surely our failures will cause us regret and pain, and lead us to the Lord to entreat his forgiveness

in the name and merit of him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

David's warfare with the enemies of the Lord, and with the enemies of the kingdom and law which the Lord had established in Israel, were continued through David's career, and these very properly represent the warfare which all the Lord's beloved ones must endure faithfully if they would abide in his favor. Loyalty to the principles of the divine government is of prime importance; the royal banner must be lifted high; our lives must be risked and be given in defence of the divine character and teachings if we would be counted worthy of the kingdom of glory, if we would belong to the house of David, the beloved, which the Lord has promised shall be established forever—the house of Christ, the house of sons.

We review Solomon's peaceful reign and note how its opening years were typical of the blessings of the noontide of the Millennial kingdom. The glories and wisdom and wealth of Solomon were but trifles in comparison to the wisdom, honor and riches which God has promised to those who love him. Respecting the faithful overcomers, we remember it is declared that they shall know even as they are known by God, that they shall share the glory, honor and immortality of their glorious Head and Master.

We remember, too, the typical temple, and its construction from materials previously prepared during the Levitic reign, and how this prefigured our preparation as living stones for the glorious temple of the future, in which God shall make his presence known to all the families of the earth for their blessing and uplifting, and for the joy of all those who shall respond to the blessed influences of the Millennial kingdom. The thought of the preparation of these stones causes us much comfort and joy respecting the trials and difficulties of this present time, as we realize that they are working out for us and in us preparations for the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory which will be ours if we are faithful when we shall be brought together in glory as the spiritual temple of the Lord.

This review is perhaps as appropriate a lesson for the closing Sunday of the year as any, especially when we remember that all of these glories and blessings and privileges are ours because of the great redemptive work accomplished by him whose entrance upon the work is celebrated by Christmas day. Although we cannot agree that this is the proper day for celebrating the birth of our dear Redeemer, but must insist that it was about October first, nevertheless since he did not intimate his desire that we should celebrate his birthday it is quite immaterial upon what day that event, of so great importance to all, is celebrated. Upon this day, so generally celebrated, we may properly enough join with all whose hearts are in the attitude of love and appreciation toward God and toward the Savior.

The habit of giving little remembrances one to another at this time of year seems to us specially appropriate. God is the great giver of every good and perfect gift. He is continually giving and we are continually receiving from him; but amongst all his gifts the one of greatest importance to us is the gift of his Son to be our Redeemer. While, therefore, thanking the Lord for this great gift and for the great plan which centered in it, it is appropriate that we cultivate in our hearts the spirit of liberality, generosity, and that we allow this spirit to exercise itself to some extent—according to our conditions and circumstances — toward those with whom we have contact, especially to the members of our own household. We recommend that every little gift on this occasion should, so far as possible, represent or be accompanied by some little remembrancer of the great gift—something to draw the mind of the recipient to the fact that the great gift of God in Christ is and should be in the minds of all who give or who receive the trifling exchanges of the season.

REQUESTS FOR PILGRIM VISITS, 1904

The following information is very important in connection with arrangements for "Pilgrim" services. There is no charge for these services, nor for the traveling expenses; nor are collections ever to be taken up. We expect that all friends of the truth will be glad to entertain the "pilgrims," during their brief stays, with "such things as ye have;" but where circumstances do not permit this, the "pilgrims" are prepared to pay their way. If you desire to be remembered by us when we lay out the routes for these "pilgrims," please answer the following questions—on a postal card or on separate paper from your letter. You need not repeat the questions, but merely number the answers, thus. No. 1—Yes (or No). No. 2—Twice a week—Sunday and Wednesday (or whatever may be the truth). No. 9—Sunday at 3 p. m. at Bible House, 610 Arch Street; Wednesday 8 p. m., same place (or whatever may be the facts of your case). And thus with each question.

If you cannot answer all the questions reply to as many as possible. Neglect to send in such requests will be understood to mean that the "pilgrim" visits of 1903 were not appreciated, and that you think it undesirable to have them continued so far as possible in 1904. Requests of 1903 hold good until January 31, 1904. "Pilgrim" routes are laid out sometimes several months ahead and cannot well be altered; hence the necessity for our having full information and in time.

ANSWER AS MANY AS POSSIBLE OF THESE QUERIES

(1) Are regular meetings now held in your vicinity?
(2) How frequently?
(3) What is the present average attendance?
(4) Is request for pilgrim visits the publicly expressed wish of those who usually attend meetings?
(5) Will suitable places be secured for parlor meetings?
(6) Can suitable room for a public meeting be secured?
(7) At what date are leaders or elders chosen?
(8) Give full name and address of regularly elected elders,—that arrangements for pilgrim visits may be committed to them.
(9) Give addresses of meeting places and hours.
(10) To whom should the pilgrim be referred for entertainment?
(11) If no regularly chosen elders, give at least one address in full, beside your own.
(12) Give your own name and address in full (state if colored) and any other information likely to be useful.
(13) If not on the railroad give name of proper station and your distance from it, and the direction. State also if a conveyance would meet the pilgrim at station and return him to it.

THE BOYHOOD OF JESUS

LUKE 2:40-52.—JANUARY 3.

For the first six months of the new year the International Lessons turn again to the New Testament, beginning appropriately enough with the childhood of Jesus.

The more we think of it the more marvelous it seems that the Gospel narratives record so many of the particulars of our dear Redeemer's ministry—miracles, teachings, etc.—yet never once descend to the discussion of commonplace events, nor of our Lord's sayings or doings other than those directly connected with his ministry. This is one of the strongest internal evidences that these books were written under divine supervision. Our experience with the writings of men in all ages assures us that it would be almost impossible for four men to write biographies of one person, such as these four Gospels are, without entering into social features and events. Our Lord's mother is barely mentioned, and this only where her life touched particularly with that of Jesus. Her husband, Joseph, was probably dead at the time our Lord's ministry began, yet no mention is made of this fact either.

Respecting our Lord's life, previous to his consecration at thirty years of age, we know scarcely anything. The four Gospels merely bring to our attention his miraculous birth, Herod's jealous fury, and the escape of the child before the massacre of the innocents, followed by the little incident of our lesson, which occurred in his twelfth year, and the declaration that he increased in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man. How brief the record, yet how suggestive! It would have been no part of the Gospel to have explained the details of his life as a boy, as a young man, etc. It might, indeed, have satisfied the curiosity of some to have told us whether he was a farmer or a fisherman or a carpenter, matters about which people seem inclined to dispute. Undoubtedly the Lord's way in this matter was the better one. Our minds are more drawn to the important features of the Lord's work by reason of the brevity of the sketch given us of his earthly life and interests.

The important thing for us to know is simply stated, namely, that he was the beginning of the creation of God—the first born of every creature; that in his preëxistent condi-

tion he had glory with the Father before the world was, and was the Father's instrument in the creation of angels, principalities and powers and men, everything that was made. (John 1) The necessary particulars are also given us respecting the transference of this great spirit being to earthly human conditions—that he might become man and redeem man, the world; that he might be born under the law and thus redeem those who were under the law, the Jews. Let us then thank God heartily for the simplicity of the narrative, and for the fact that no item necessary to our comfort and peace and joy has been omitted therefrom, and that no needless items pertaining merely to earthly things have been permitted to intrude themselves and thus to dim in any measure the glorious record of the great love wherewith the Father loved us and the great redemption effected thereby.

Coming more particularly to the appointed lesson: We see that the boy Jesus, although miraculously begotten, not of the will of the flesh, nor of man, but by the holy Spirit, was permitted to grow after the ordinary manner, gradually, getting stronger physically and mentally, being filled more and more with wisdom, and giving evidence that God's favor was upon him. Quite probably Jospeh, his foster father, was a carpenter, and if so the boy Jesus unquestionably, like other boys, would have more or less association in the carpenter shop, its tools, etc. It has been wondered by some that our Lord never referred to carpenter tools or work in any of his teachings or parables, and this has been urged as an objection to the thought that he was reared in contact with such work and tools. It matters not, so far as we can see. Our Lord addressed, not classes, but the masses; and quite probably the majority of the people at the time knew little about the carpenter's trade, tools, etc., even less than in our day. Hence it was not necessary or appropriate that our Lord should use as figures and parables that which would not be common to the experiences of all or nearly all of his hearers.

In verse 41 Joseph is evidently referred to as one of his parents. This is not in conflict, however, with the previous statements of the same writer, to the effect that Jesus was begotten, not by Joseph, but by the holy Spirit. (Luke 1:30-35) We would consider it proper enough today that any child should speak of his foster-father or stepfather as father without explaining the particulars of the relationship, and likewise it would be proper for the friends to speak of both father and mother as the parents of the child, as in this verse under consideration and previous verses.—Vs. 27.

The narrative passes over the twelve years of Jesus' earthly life to tell of the incident of his tarrying behind after having been with his parents at the Passover Feast. The religious Jews from all parts of the country went to Jerusalem upon these feast occasions according to the directions of the Law, and naturally enough close relatives traveled in each other's company considerably. Thus it was that in the large concourse returning from Jerusalem after the feast a whole day elapsed before the boy Jesus was missed by those who properly had guardianship over him. Although admonished by the angel Gabriel that Jesus would in due time be greatly honored of God, and that he was born differently from others of the human family, nevertheless neither Mary nor Joseph seemed to have caught any considerable view of the greatness of the one whom they called their son Jesus. The prophecies spoken respecting him, like all the prophecies of olden times, were more or less vague, and could not be comprehended except by the aid of the holy Spirit, which had not yet been given. His mother Mary, however, we are told, kept all these things pondering in her heart, wondering what would be the consummation—little dreaming, we may be sure, how great her son must ultimately be made, according to the divine arrangement.

The story of the boy of twelve amongst the Doctors of the Law, discussing the various types of the law and what these probably signified, and what would be expected to be their antitypes, furnish us a very interesting picture, especially when we remember that the one who was asking the questions was the one who ultimately would give correct answers to those questions in his own experiences. We are not to assume that this precocious boy of twelve was unduly bold or forward; we are not to presume that he undertook to teach the Doctors of the Law. He was not yet anointed to preach, and was therefore not yet qualified. The narrative is that he was found hearing the doctors and asking them questions, and not attempting to teach them. There is a good suggestion here—especially for such as are not permitted to teach, by reason of sex or insufficient years—namely, that even a child can ask questions, and in asking the questions may suggest wonderful and powerful answers.

We may reasonably assume that Jesus had previously, after the manner of the Jewish boys, attended the synagogue worship at his home, and that hearing there the Law and the prophets, the Scriptures of the Old Testament, read Sabbath after Sabbath, and having a perfect memory and an active mind, because not blemished by sin and the fall, the various questions of the Law and the various declarations of the prophets would greatly interest him—especially as he realized that he had left the Father and had come into the world to do a redemptive work.

The Doctors of the Law doubtless remarked that they had never had such pointed questions asked them respecting the law and the prophets, even by wise men of their day and by each other; hence they evidently noticed the precocity of this boy. As he asked questions which apparently showed that some of their interpretations were faulty and inconsistent, they in turn considered it not beneath themselves to ply the boy with questions. Doubtless they thought that after his questions had confounded them their questions would likewise confound the boy, but, according to verse 47, so far from confounding him they got their questions answered in such a manner as amazed them. Nevertheless we are to remember that our Lord Jesus could not have himself understood the full meaning of the law shadows and the prophecies at that time—nor until after his anointing with the holy Spirit. (1 Cor. 2:14) This little item gives us a suggestion respecting the ability of mind that would belong to a perfect boy. It gives us a suggestion respecting what we may expect of the ancient worthies when they shall be resurrected to human perfection, and the same suggestion also of what we may expect of the perfection of the church in the glorious condition promised in the first resurrection.

It was natural enough that after missing the boy for four days his mother should upbraid him somewhat, and, taking Jesus' answer in its simplicity, we must suppose that he had been so absorbed with the opportunities and studies that the time had passed without his appreciating the trouble and inconvenience he was causing to others.

"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" must have seemed strange enough even from so remarkable a boy. His parents did not fully comprehend the meaning of the words, but Mary set these apart with the other peculiar things to treasure up, hoping ultimately to see something that would fully justify the words, as she did afterwards see. After making this protest respecting his desire to be engaged in the heavenly Father's mission, studying his Word and teachings, and realizing that his sentiments were not understood or appreciated, and that really he was still properly under subjection to his parents, Jesus said no more, but went quietly with them to Nazareth and doubtless to his accustomed vocation.

Our Lord could not begin his ministry because he was under the Law and bound by its every restriction. We note, however, his promptness to engage in his heavenly Father's business at the very earliest moment, as we read, "Now when Jesus *began* to be about thirty years of age he came to Jordan to be baptized." We who are not under the restraints of the Law Covenant but, on the contrary, are under grace, are not thus limited as to the time we may present our bodies living sacrifices upon the Lord's altar to be used in his service; hence we rejoice the more if we can find that at an early date we can give our hearts and our all to him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

It was not the babe of Bethlehem that was to bless the world, nor the boy of Nazareth, nor the young man of Capernaum, but it was to be a full-grown man, a mature one, whose sacrifice would offset the sin of Adam, redeem him and his posterity and satisfy the demands of divine justice against the condemned race. So, then, while interested in everything pertaining to the divine character and plan, while interested to know how Jesus grew in stature and in wisdom as he approached the maturity of manhood at thirty years, while interested to know about his miraculous birth, our chief interest in all of these things is that they established our faith in him as the man Christ Jesus—that he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and therefore able to make the atonement sacrifice—to give his own life a ransom, a corresponding price for the life of Adam, and thus for the life of the whole race of Adam, in his loins at the time of his transgression and thus sharers with him in his condemnation.

We do well, therefore, to dwell less upon the birth and infancy of Jesus and more and more to grasp the precious themes set before us in the Gospel, of which the cross is the great point or center of interest. Similarly we regard all the followers of the Lord—not according to the flesh but according to the spirit. True, we are glad to know of some that even before their consecration and baptism of the spirit were noble

minded, virtuous and irreproachable, and we have a measure of regret when we hear of some who had a contrary disposition to this; nevertheless our interest centers around the fact that they did turn from sin, did become the Lord's followers and that they have been begotten of his holy Spirit. In this we rejoice. Thus we know each other according to the spirit as new creatures in the Lord, and thus we know our Lord as the new creature, as the Apostle suggests, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, henceforth know we him so no more." Our special interest centers in our Lord from the moment of his anointing of the spirit until he completed the work there begun three and one-half years later on the cross, crying, "It is finished." Our interest still holds beyond that point in the resurrection of our Lord from the dead, and the evidence thus given us that the begetting of the spirit at his baptism became the birth of the spirit at his resurrection, and that he was thus the first born from the dead, born of the spirit to spirit conditions. Then our hope is to follow in his steps, and thus realize the promise that if we suffer with him we shall also be glorified together and share his kingdom and his nature in glory.

"JOHN THE BAPTIST AND THE PROMISED ELIJAH"

MATT. 3:1-12.—JANUARY 10.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

In the first three verses of our lesson are summarized the mission and work of John, our Lord's cousin, respecting whom the Master said, "Verily I say unto you, there hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist: and yet I say unto you that the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." John's mission was to announce that kingdom, but it was not his privilege to become a member of it. He was the friend of the Bridegroom, as he expressed it. He heard his voice communing with the prospective betrothed, and he rejoiced as his friend, but not as a member of the betrothed class—the bride, the church of this spirit dispensation, the least one of whom enjoys a higher privilege and station than did this noble prophet: because even hereunto were they called and he called not.

John from his birth was specially prepared to be a servant of the Lord in the capacity he filled, and on reaching the age of maturity he, being fully consecrated, at once began the service. He was six months older than our Lord, and hence began his ministry that much sooner. Abstaining from earthly comforts, he subsisted on the plainest of food, and was attired merely with a camel's hair girdle about his loins. His entire time and attention were thus left free for the mission before him.

We do not advocate that all the Lord's people follow the example of John the Baptist in respect to their food and raiment, but we do believe that a good lesson of simplicity, consecration and zeal may be drawn from his course. We do believe that our Lord's faithful followers might copy John's example to the extent of avoiding the extremes of social custom, not only in their clothing but also in their food. We advocate "things decent" and "things honest," as the Apostle expresses the matter—a simplicity of diet and wardrobe. Those who have consecrated their time and energy and influence to the Lord, and to the service of the truth, will do well for their spiritual interests to be on guard against the fashions and follies of this world in these matters; and whether they eat or drink, or whatsoever they do or wear, that all may be done to the glory of the Lord—with a view to their own greatest usefulness in the divine service and in the service of the household of faith.

John's mission was heaven-directed, and exactly at the right time to introduce the Lord Jesus to the Jewish nation, which had been waiting for him for centuries to fulfil in and through their nation the promise made to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Under divine guidance the affairs of Israel were, outwardly at least, more prosperous than they had been for centuries, and they were as a nation hoping that this return of God's favor might culminate in the sending of the promised King for the exaltation of their nation and through its establishment in power the blessing of Israelitish rule in the name of the Lord should be extended to all the families of the earth. We are told that amongst the Jews "all men were in expectation of the Messiah."—Luke 3:15.

No wonder then that so striking a figure as John the Baptist made an impression when he announced that God's kingdom was soon to be established, and that he had been sent as an advance minister to proclaim it and to sanctify the hosts of Israel, that they might be prepared to be the hosts of the Messiah in the fulfillment of the long-expected promise to Abraham. By a new method those who accepted John's teaching were required to mark their reformation of life, namely, by an immersion of water, which symbolized their putting away of sin, their return to full covenant relationship with God, already established through Moses, the mediator of the Law Covenant. All who did this with true sincerity of heart, and not merely an outward form, undoubtedly were Israelites indeed, of the very kind that the Lord would be pleased to accept and own and bless under the spirit dispensation soon to be inaugurated

And thus we find that not only many of the disciples of Jesus were previously disciples of John, but also that many of those who received Jesus had previously received John. Nevertheless the majority of those baptized by John evidently had not been touched to the heart by his preaching, but merely nominally repented and instituted some slight reform.

The movement became a popular one, and drew to it many who loved publicity and notoriety, and who are always foremost in the promise of godliness but are without its power, therefore without the sincerity, without the heart interest. John recognized the hypocrisy of many of the leading Pharisees and Sadducees who came to his baptism, and by some prophetic power was enabled to read their hearts in a manner which would be improper for us to do. This prophetic insight not only permitted John to call these false ones a brood of vipers, but permitted him also to intimate to them the great day of wrath that was soon to come upon that nation; "wrath to the uttermost," as the Apostle Paul speaks of it (1 Thess. 2:16)—the wrath of God which entirely swallowed up the nation and left the land almost desolate, scattering the people amongst all the nations. John would not baptize these until they showed by outward conduct a change of life, a change of heart and not merely a changed profession. He realized that this class in particular was stumbling over the promise made to Abraham, because they were his natural children without having Abraham's faith. John inspiredly warned them to the contrary, that God was quite able to establish his kingdom in due time and to ignore them entirely.

Verse 10 is a further part of his prophecy, declaring that fruitage was necessary on their part, and that any who did not bear the fruitage required would be cut off from divine favor and cast into the fiery trouble with which the Jewish age ended.

Prophetically John realized that his mission was merely a preparatory one, and that somehow—how he could not understand—the coming one would have the power to immerse the faithful in the holy Spirit, in holy power, and the unfaithful with a baptism of fire, of trouble. Again he likened the ministry of Christ to that nation as that of a reaper who, with a winnowing fan, would separate the true wheat from the chaff, gathering the wheat to the garner of the Gospel age at Pentecost and in due time thereafter permit the fires—confusion, anarchy and the Roman legions—to entirely consume the chaff of that people in an unquenchable fire, a trouble that would not be extinguished, that the Lord would not help them out of, but that would utterly destroy their national polity.

ELIJAH THE ARCHETYPE

Elijah the Tishbite, who in the days of King Ahab was used of the Lord to produce a reformation in Israel by which the priests of Baal and their power over the people were overthrown, was declared to be a type or likeness of a greater reformer who would precede Messiah to announce him and to make ready for his reign. Our lesson (verse 3) declares that John the Baptist was an antitype to Elijah. We see that he did do a work of reformation amongst the Lord's people at the first advent, the work of introducing the Messiah. Moreover, we remember that the disciples asked Jesus respecting this very prophecy saying, If you are the Messiah what answer should we give to the Jews who say that Elias (Greek for Elijah) must first come? Our Lord's answer was that Elias had already come, (John the Baptist, the antitype of Elijah), and that the Jews knew him not, recognized him not, but had done to him whatsoever they pleased—imprisoning him and ultimately beheading him in prison. Our Lord further added "Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them." "Then the disciples understood that he spoke unto them of John the Baptist."—Matt. 17:10-13.

As it was a surprise to the disciples that John, the Lord's forerunner and the antitypical Elijah, should be put to death, so likewise it was a surprise to them that the Master himself,

instead of reigning, should be crucified. It took them some little time to understand that the Lord's coming as Messiah had two phases—one in humiliation, a suffering ending in death and apparent defeat, the other to follow later in power and great glory, to reign, to uplift, to bless Israel and all nations, thus fulfilling on the richest possible scale all the precious promises through all the holy prophets since the world began. It was appropriate also that the Lord should explain that there should be a second coming of Elijah—an antitypical Elijah on a still higher plane, of as much larger proportions than John the Baptist as the second coming of Messiah will be grander and more glorious than his first coming.

John the Baptist himself understood that he was not fulfilling all the features of the antitypical Elijah—he evidently understood that there would be still a larger fulfilment by an archetype. This is evidenced from his own words when asked, Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. (John 1:21) Our Lord's words explained the matter, showing that he was the antitypical Elijah in a certain measure, to a certain extent, to that the nation of Israel. Jesus said "This is Elias *if ye will receive it.*" That is to say, to those who recognized his message and who obeyed it and who became the Lord's disciples, to these John fulfilled the work of Elijah (Matt. 11:14)* Likewise Jesus is already the Christ, the Messiah, the King, to those few who have ears to hear and hearts to receive the message—the household of faith, the church; but as John was not the Elijah promised to the world in general, so Jesus was not yet come as the Messiah. This coming of Jesus to the world as the world's King, to take unto himself his great power and reign, is the grand event toward which all prophecy points, and before that event takes place the antitypical Elijah of still larger proportions than John the Baptist must bear a witness and message to the world.

As we have already pointed out, Christ, the Messiah of the divine plan, includes not only Jesus glorified, the Captain of our salvation, the High Priest of our profession, head over the royal priesthood, the glorious church, but it includes also the church which is his body, the under priests, the faithful which shall sit with him in his throne, be like him and share his glory and his divine nature. And as the anointed Christ of glory is a composite one of many members under one glorious Head (Eph. 1:18), so the antitypical Elijah is a multitudinous one. Jesus in the flesh was the Head of this great Elijah, bearing witness to and preparing the way for the coming of the great Messiah and Deliverer in due time. The church, the body of the Christ in the flesh all down through this Gospel age, has been the body of the antitypical Elijah bearing witness all down through these centuries to all the families of the earth that God is to set up a kingdom, and urging preparation therefor, urging a repentance from sin and reformation toward God, and being used of God as the instrumentality for the anointing of the most holy ones. Soon this work of the church, of announcing the kingdom and calling upon men everywhere to repent and reform, will be at an end, and the kingdom will be introduced with power and great glory. Soon the work of baptizing the anointed ones and witnessing to their relationship to God will be at an end. Soon this antitypical Elijah, like John, will be restrained from further proclamation—and ultimately be cut off. Soon thereafter the kingdom will be revealed. The faithful overcomers, as the wheat gathered from the sowing of this Gospel message of the kingdom, will be gathered into the kingdom, glorified with their Lord and Head, and soon thereafter the kingdom itself will be manifested—"revealed in flaming fire"—in judgments, in troubles, distress of nations, etc. Soon the Messiah, head and body, in glory, will so overrule in the affairs of men, that the nations of earth shall be broken to shivers as potters' vessels; and soon thereafter, on the ruins of the present reign of sin and selfishness under Satan, who shall be fully brought to naught and bound for a thousand years, all the blessed influences of righteousness, justice, truth and love will be set at liberty amongst the people, that the whole world may be blessed according to the divine promise.—Gal. 3:16, 29.

That the church is the true antitype of Elijah is beyond question to those who have an understanding of the divine plan. As the Christ is composed of many members, and as the man of sin is a system of many members, so the antitypical Elijah is composed of many members. The three years and a half of no rain under the prophesying of Elijah the Tishbite are shown in Revelation to have their larger fulfilment in connection with the great Elijah archetype, the church in the flesh. Those three and one-half years, a time, times and a half-time, or forty-two months or 1260 days, represent just that many years in the archetype, namely, the 1260 years that the true church was persecuted and in a wilderness condition because of the power of papacy, which, in Revelation, is likened to the woman Jezebel who persecuted Elijah.—Rev. 12:14.

* MILLENNIAL DAWN, Chap. 8, Vol. II.

Lord, for tomorrow and its needs I do not pray;
Keep me from any stain of sin just for today.
Let me both diligently work and duly pray;
Let me be kind in word and deed just for today.
Let me be slow to do my will, prompt to obey;
Help me to sacrifice myself just for today.
Let me no wrong nor idle word unthinking say;
Set thou thy seal up my lips just for today.
So for tomorrow and its needs I do not pray,
But keep me, guide me, hold me, Lord, just for today.

VOL. VI NOT A SPECIAL TOWER ISSUE

Owing to the postal ruling which deprived us of the privilege of mailing paper-bound DAWNS at second-class rates, as special issues of the WATCH TOWER, we cannot send Vol. VI. to our WATCH TOWER subscribers in the same manner as formerly. There will be no paper bound edition issued, and all *subscribers* who want the sixth volume should remit at the rate of 30c per copy for cloth-bound books. This price covers postage.

"IN THE WINEPRESS ALONE"

In the dusk of the sorrowful hours,
The time of our trouble and tears,
With frost at the heart of the flowers,
And blight on the bloom of the years,—
Like the mother voice, tenderly hushing
The sound of the sob and the moan,
We hear, when the anguish is crushing,
"He trod the winepress alone."

And, therefore, he knows to the uttermost
The pangs that the mortal can bear:
No mortal has pain that the Master
Refuses to heal or to share.
And the cries that ascend to the Loving,
Who bruised him for us to atone,
Are hushed at the gentle reproving,—
"He trod the winepress alone."

How sudden so e'er the disaster,
Or heavy the hand that may smite,
We are yet in the grace of the Master,
We are never out of his sight.
Though the winnowing winds of temptation
May forth from all quarters be blown,
We are sure of the coming salvation—
The Lord will remember his own!

From him, in the night of his trial,
Both heaven and earth fled away;
His boldest had only denial,
His dearest had only dismay.
With a cloud o'er the face of the Father,
He entered the anguish unknown;
But we, though our sorrows may gather,
Shall never endure them alone.

THIS JOURNAL AND ITS MISSION

THIS journal is set for the defence of the only true foundation of the Christian's hope now being so generally repudiated, —Redemption through the precious blood of "the man Christ Jesus who gave himself a *ransom* [a corresponding price, a substitute] for all." (1 Pet. 1:19; 1 Tim. 2:6) Building up on this sure foundation the gold, silver and precious stones (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Pet. 1:5-11) of the Word of God, its further mission is to—"Make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery which . . . has been hid in God, . . . to the intent that now might be made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God"—"which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed."—Eph. 3:5-9, 10.

It stands free from all parties, sects and creeds of men, while it seeks more and more to bring its every utterance into fullest subjection to the will of God in Christ, as expressed in the Holy Scriptures. It is thus free to declare boldly whatsoever the Lord hath spoken;—according to the divine wisdom granted unto us, to understand. Its attitude is not dogmatical, but confident; for we know whereof we affirm, treading with implicit faith upon the sure promises of God. It is held as a trust, to be used only in his service; hence our decisions relative to what may and what may not appear in its columns must be according to our judgment of his good pleasure, the teaching of his Word, for the upbuilding of his people in grace and knowledge. And we not only invite but urge our readers to prove all its utterances by the infallible Word to which reference is constantly made, to facilitate such testing.

TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship;" that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished God's blessing shall come "to all people," and they find access to him.—1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29.

That meantime the chiseling, shaping and polishing, of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin, progresses; and when the last of these "living stones," "elect and precious," shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection, and the Temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8.

That the Basis of Hope, for the Church and the World, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for *every* man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth *every man that cometh into the world*," "in due time."—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6.

That the Hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be "partaker of the divine nature," and share his glory as his joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests of the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; 20:6.

That the hope of the World lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to *all* by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be *destroyed*.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 35.

CHARLES T. RUSSELL, Editor.

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